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THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

SALVATOR ROSA.

VOL II.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STR

THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

SALVATOR ROSA.

BY LADY MORGAN.

One whom no servile hope of gain, or frosty apprehension of danger, can make a parasite either to time, place, or opinion. *B. Jonson.*

Famoso pittore delle cose morali. *Il Buca di Salviati.*

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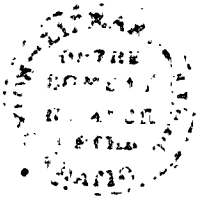
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



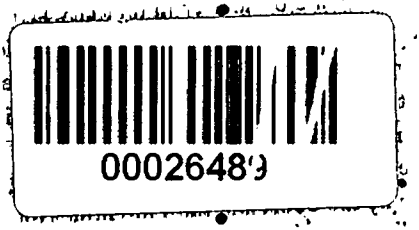
LONDON

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1824.

92°/·5
26489



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WITH the life of Masaniello ended all that was laudable in the revolutionary movement, of which he had been the leader and the chief.* Other interests came into play; but the cabals

* "Il semble que Masaniello n'avait paru que pour manifester son génie, sa supreme intelligence, sa capacité, et pour operer les plus grands évènemens. En huit jours, cet homme, simple pêcheur, assujettit un grand royaume, le delivre de la servitude, conduit à sa perfection le grand ouvrage de l'abolition des impôts," &c.—*Histoire de la Révolution de Naples.*

of a vile and sordid aristocracy, the intrigues of the French government through their agents at Rome, the headlong enterprises of the gallant and unfortunate Duc de Guise (whose object was to erect Naples into a republic), the revolt of the other cities and towns of the kingdom, and the sanguinary contests of factions, fighting not for liberty but for plunder,—all ended in the triumph of the house of Hapsburg, whose tyranny had incapacitated the slaves it had debased, for recovering that liberty of which it had so long deprived them.

Whatever had been the expectations of Salvator Rosa and Aniello Falcone, they ended with the life of Masaniello.* The view which

* Salvator in his fourth Satire, some part of which was evidently sketched on his return from Naples, apostrophizes the spirit and virtues of Masaniello with great force and feeling, and in a strain which recalls Petrarch's invocation to Cola Rienzi.

" Mira l' alto ardimento, ancor chè inerme
Quante ingiustizie in un sol giorno opprime
Un vile, un scalzo, un pescatore, un verme.

Mira

that event gave them of the character of a people formed in the school of political degradation, dissipated every hope of romantic patriotism.*

Mira in basso natale alma sublime,
Che per sèrbar della sua patria i fregi,
Le più superbe teste adegua all' ime,
Ecco ripullular gli antichi pregi
De' Codri, e degli Ancuri e de' Trasiboli
S' oggi un vil piscator dà norma ai regi."

La Guerra.

* The people, stunned by the death of Masaniello, exhibited, in the first instance, neither grief nor resentment; and when the partisans of Spain had his body drawn through the city and thrown into a ditch, they looked on, says an impartial historian, "*avec un sang-froid et une insensibilité qui les characterisent.*" A few days after, the popular feeling arose to frenzy; they recovered the body of their idol, and his funeral was conducted with almost royal magnificence. The remains of the unfortunate Captain-general lay in state in the church del Carmine, covered with a royal mantle; a crown was placed on his head, and the *bâton* of his office and a naked sword were deposited on his bier. With equal pomp, and followed by 80,000 persons, the body was paraded through the city; and as the procession passed the Vice-

Falcone fled to France, where he lived with honour and respect, and died full of years and of fame. Salvator Rosa returned to Rome,—

Faint, weary, sore, embroiled, grieved, and brent,

and glowing with that "smart and inward ire," beyond all power, and, perhaps, all inclination to conceal. The political state of Rome, engrossed and agitated as its society then was by the French and Spanish cabals, favoured his security, and spared him those persecutions which, as an abettor of any revolution, he might in other times have sustained.

Too agitated to still down his bitter and perturbed spirit to the tranquil pursuit of his art, the stingings of his lacerated and disappointed feelings found vent in a medium more adapted to give a rapid and ready expression to powerful emotion. Internal evidence refers the composi-

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roy's palace, the terrified Duke sent forth eight of his pages to join the cavalcade, and he ordered the guards to pay military honours to the remains of the man he had so basely assassinated.

tion of his magnificent poem "*La Babilonia*," to this period. This poem is a sort of dramatic eclogue, in which, under a somewhat allegorical form, the character and principles of Salvator himself, the moral and political position of his native country, and the disappointment of all his hopes of its regeneration, are given, with such truth and force, and in such deep and honest bursts of indignation, as cannot fail to excite a sympathy in the reader for the patriot, exceeding even his admiration for the poet,—powerfully as it must be called forth by the merits of a highly poetical composition.

Tirreno, a fisherman on the shores of the Bosphorus, is discovered just as the morning-star ushers in the dawn, flinging all the instruments of his profession into the waves, and giving utterance to an indignant vow to abandon for ever an element and a pursuit which have mocked him with endless disappointment. Ergasto, a traveller, arrives at the moment of this sacrifice, and inquires its cause. The answer of the poet, whose own feelings of

misery come at once upon the canvass, is the very epic of melancholy discontentment—a discontentment engendered by the finest sensibility, blasted in its hopes and its efforts for ameliorating human sufferings, and amending human institutions.

The artful inquiries of Ergasto draw the piscatory misanthropist into a detailed developement of his contempt for society, and lead him to speak of himself and the country of his birth. It is then that the impetuous Neapolitan, smarting under the still-bleeding wounds of his disappointed patriotism, sketches boldly and bitterly a view of that country, the slave of slaves, (*"patria serva dei servi,"*) which seems to glory in the chain to which she has again basely submitted. He sees only in the land of his birth, the *"hated object of his memory,"* (*"l'odioso oggetto della mia memoria,"*) the focus of all abuses in government, of all ridicules and superstitions in society! The memory neither of Virgil nor of Sannazaro, which he venerates, so blinds him

with national vanity, as to render him insensible to the vices of the degraded and despotic nobility, to the miseries of the oppressed people, or to the preponderating influence of knaves and bandits, who every where hold the ascendant. He solemnly renounces Naples for ever; and leaving to others "their sympathy for Vesuvius and Posilippo," he resolves to seek the means of existence and of fame far from the magic circle of that false syren, to whose sweet song he is no longer bound; and who, with all her witcheries, has become the object of his abhorrence, his hatred, and his contempt!

For daring truth, deep feeling, and powerful expression, there is not perhaps any thing in Italian poetry comparable to this satire. Its language is the poetry of passion; and while the feeble Della-Cruscans are seeking in its noble bursts of an almost sublime indignation, for some word that has not been "*bagnato nel Arno,*" or some term unauthorized by the *Trecentisti,* the superior intellects and more sensible spirits of all ages and nations, and above

all, of such nations as resemble the unhappy country of Salvator, will read his Babilonia with that profound and corresponding sympathy which forms the highest eulogium, as it is the surest evidence, of genius and inspiration; an eulogium, which professional criticism, in its cold and scanning technicalities, can "*neither give nor take away.*"

The return of Salvator to Rome was no sooner known*, than his friends and admirers crowded to his house, mingling, with pleasure at his arrival, and with fresh demands upon his talents†, a lively curiosity respecting the events in which he had been engaged. Salvator, whose words were pictures, related his own adventures, and detailed the events of which he had both been a witness and promoter, with all that powerful and graphic eloquence for which he was so celebrated. Nor was this

* "Ritornò a Roma, vi aprì casa; ecco giunto a grado di gran maestro," &c.—*Pascoli.*

† "A Roma dove subito ebbe molti commissioni, e fece molti lavori."—*Vita di S. Rosa.*

the measure of his imprudence; for he hesitated not to recite such passages of "La Babilonia" and "La Guerra" as were then hastily thrown together, and recited them with all the bitterness of spirit in which they were composed.

While, in the presence of princes and of prelates*, he thus inveighed against tyranny

* Salvator is said never to have suffered the rank or office of his auditors to interfere with the freedom of his expression in his poetical recitations. Cardinal Sforza Pallavicini, one of the most splendid patrons and rigid critics of his day, was curious to hear the improvvisatore of the *Via Babbuina*, and sent an invitation requesting Salvator's company at his palace. Salvator frankly declared that two conditions were annexed to his accepting the honour of the Eminentissimo's acquaintance; first, that the cardinal should come to *his* house, as he never recited in any other; and next, that he should not object to any passage, whose omission would detract from the original character of his works, or compromise his own sincerity. The cardinal accepted the condition. The next day all the literary *frelaquets* of Rome crowded to the levee of the hypercritical Porporato, to learn his

and oppression, with all a poet's fire and a patriot's zeal, two splendid pictures which he had executed for himself, since his return, were exhibited in the chamber where he held his conversazioni, which added materially to the impression. These were illustrative of those bold opinions, and of that melancholy experience, which had disturbed the tranquillity of his life, and shadowed even its brightest days with sadness. The first represented a beautiful girl, seated on a glass globe; her brow was crowned with flowers, the fairest and the frailest; her arms were filled by a lovely infant, which she appeared to caress; while its twin-brother, cradled at her feet, was occupied in blowing air-bubbles from a tube. A child, something older, was mis-

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opinion of a poet, whose style was without precedent. The cardinal declared, with a justice which posterity has sanctioned, that "Salvator's poetry was full of splendid passages, but that, as a whole, it was unequal."

chievously employed in setting fire to a wreath of flax twined round a spindle. Above this group of blooming youth and happy infancy, with wings outspread and threatening aspect, hovered the grim figure of Death, dictating the following sentence:—

"Nasci pœna—vita labor—necesse mori."

The label affixed to this painted allegory, called the picture "L'Umana Fragilità*." It

* The Abbate Baptista Ricciardi, the dear friend of Salvator, alludes to this celebrated picture in a canzone addressed to the painter:—

"Rosa, il nascere è pena,
Il vivere è fatica,
Ed il morir necessità fatale!"

How strongly this insignificance of life and the image of death were impressed on Salvator's mind, is evinced through all his works. The picture itself is but a repetition of the same idea in his Babilonia.

"Io so che l'uom della fortuna è un gioco,
E a far che mai gloria mortal mi domini
Mi figuro il sepolcro in ogni loco."

"I know

expressed the labour of existence, and the nothingness of life, a truth which none feel so keenly as they who, like Salvator, are endowed with qualities which the vulgar believe most largely to contribute to the enjoyment of their possessor. But that fatal pre-eminence which the lowly worship, and the envious malign, gives only a finer faculty for suffering; and while it opens the sources of petty vexations, and exalts the poignancy of the greater moral afflictions, it places its gifted victim at an immeasurable distance from the heartless enjoyments and trifling pleasures of more ordinary humanity.

The second of these philosophical pictures was a painted illustration of his poetical satires. "Fortune," as she is represented when fancy paints her in her brightest smiles, appeared as

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"I know that man is the jest of fortune; and that mortal glories may never seduce me, I have ever before me the image of the tomb."

a fair woman, pouring from a cornucopia a torrent of riches, honours, crowns, mitres, crosses, jewels, gems, and coins, which fell in endless succession upon a multitude of gaping, greedy candidates for her fickle favour. These candidates were all either unclean beasts, crawling reptiles, or birds of prey, filthy, sanguinary, and rapacious. In their eagerness to snatch at the treasures which Fortune seemed to reserve for them, they trampled under their feet the symbols of genius, liberty, and philosophy, which impeded their efforts; and books, globes, and instruments, the pen, the pencil, the stylus, and the compass, lay broken, sullied, and neglected. The ass decked himself with orders, the swine assumed the mitre, the fox mounted a cross; wolves, vultures, and tigers divided amongst them princely coronets and royal crowns, and Fortune laughed while she thus accorded as caprice or violence directed her choice. This picture was known in Salvator's gallery by the name of

"*La Fortuna.*" * "It happened," says Baldinucci, "that at this time his (Rosa's) house was frequented by many great personages, secular as well as ecclesiastical; who were not only desirous to behold his beautiful pictures, but to enjoy his recitations of his own poetry. While he was still employed upon his picture of *La Fortuna*, the two cardinals, Bandinelli and Rusponi, coming out from Sal-

* "Ma questa Fortuna," (says Baldinucci, and Pascoli repeats the pun)—"fu la *mala* fortuna di Salvatore." This picture, and another on the same subject, he sold to his friend Carlo Rossi. It was the only one reserved by Rossi's heir Vallore, who afterwards sold that also to the Duke of Beaufort. Pascoli, speaking of this picture in a style scarcely translatable, says, "Il famoso della Fortuna, per cui Salvatore ebbe, allorche lo misò in mostra a San Giovanni decollato, tanti guai, che non vi valle meno della autorità di Don Mario Ghigi, fratello dell' allora regnante pontefice per liberarselo, che fu venduto per seicento scudi, mesi sono, al Duca di Beaufort, e lo porta con altri molti comperati da lui in Inghilterra." "The famous picture of La Fortuna, (for which Salvator,

vator's house, were met by Don Mario Ghigi, the brother of our *now* reigning pontiff Alexander VII. He, stopping his carriage to salute their eminences, demanded of them what entertainment they had been enjoying that morning."—"May it please your excellency," said one of the cardinals, "we have just come from Salvator Rosa's, where we have not only heard good satire *recited*, but seen good satire

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having exposed it on the feast of St. John, suffered so much persecution—a persecution from which it required nothing less than the authority of Don Mario Ghigi, brother to the reigning Pope, to liberate him,) was sold some months back for 600 scudi to the Duke of Beaufort, who carried it, with many other pictures which he had bought, to England." The "mesi sono," refer to somewhere about the latter end of the seventeenth century. The Rossi gallery may have been sold by the last inheritor, about twenty years after the death of the original collector. Pascoli, who writes with all the inaccuracy which belongs to the feeble age of literature in which he lived, places this sale of La Fortuna in the pontificate of Alexander VII. It occurred in that of Innocent X.

painted."—"I comprehend right well," quoth Don Mario, "that your Eminences, having been present at Salvator Rosa's *accademia*, may have heard good satire recited; but satire painted! in troth I am at a loss to guess your meaning." One of the cardinals, approaching the prince's carriage, detailed to him the subjects of "*La Fortuna*," and "*L'Umana Fragilità*," and spoke of their execution in a manner that rendered the prince impatient to behold them. The next morning Don Mario, accompanied by his brother the future pope, was at an early hour in the gallery of Salvator; and he was so charmed by the merits, and so amused by the humour, of the pictures, that he purchased "*L'Umana Fragilità*" at a high price, and talked of "*La Fortuna*" in such terms in the circles of Rome, that all who could get admission to Salvator's gallery went, to satisfy their curiosity or to gratify their taste. Thrown off his guard by a vanity but too susceptible, and in this instance flattered up to its bent, or haply,

in his then moody state of mind, reckless of all consequence, Salvator Rosa, in an evil hour, permitted these two extraordinary pictures to take their place in the Pantheon, on the return of the feast of San Giovanni Decollato. The Roman people, with all the shrewdness of discontent, caught the spirit of "*La Fortuna*," and applied its satire with admirable quickness. Their praises amounted to vociferations, and they elevated the painter to the dignity of their champion. The powerful members of the community, thus awakened, saw only in this sarcastic picture a libel, and they called it, "*una solennissima pasquinata*," which, under a less mild pontificate, would have doomed the artist to a public and ignominious death: "for," said they, "Nicolà Franco, for a less insolent satire upon the reigning powers, was put to death by Pius V. of blessed memory."

But the inveterate professional rivals of Salvator gave the last blow to the peace and security of the imprudent artist, by making an artful application to personal and individual

peculiarities, of a general satire, that aimed but at classes and institutions; and malice instantly supplied a key. This was done in the true spirit of spiteful mediocrity; and it had all the success which such low and dark artifices ever obtain, when addressed to the shallow intellects and susceptible self-love of the vulgar great. The nose of one powerful ecclesiastic, the eye of another, were detected in the brutish physiognomy of the swine who were treading pearls and flowers under their feet —a Cardinal was recognized in an ass scattering with his hoof the laurel and myrtle which lay in his path; and in an old goat reposing on roses, some there were who even fancied the infallible lover of Donna Olympia, the Sultana Queen of the Quirinal! The cry of atheism and sedition—of contempt of established authorities*—was thus raised under the

* Pascoli and others hint that this was not the first occasion on which Salvator incurred the *odium theologicum*, although he counted among his friends some of the most celebrated churchmen of his day.

influence of private pique and long-cherished envy: it soon found an echo in the painted walls where the Conclave sat "*in close divan*," and it was bandied about from mouth to mouth, till it reached the ears of the Inquisitor, within the dark recesses of his house of terrors. A cloud was now gathering over the head of the devoted Salvator, which, it seemed, no human power could avert. But, ere the bolt fell, his fast and tried friend, Don Mario Ghigi, threw himself between his protegé and the horrible fate which awaited him, by forcing the sullen satirist to draw up an apology, or, rather, an explanation of his fatal picture.* This explana-

* This apology was in the possession of Baldinucci, "Ed io conservo appresso di me una molto dotta apologia stata fatta a sua difesa, in quel tempo, pervenutami fra molte scritture originali ed altre, rimase alla morte di Rosa e a me state donate per ajuto di notizia per quello che io vo ora scrivendo." "And I preserve in my possession a very learned apology made in his defence at that time; which came to me with many original and other writings found on Salvator's death, and communicated to me in aid of the notice I am now writing."—*Baldinucci, Vita di S. Rosa.*

tion, bearing the title of a "*Manifesto,*" he obtained permission to present to those powerful and indignant persons in whose hands the fate of Salvator now lay. In it, Salvator explained away all that was supposed to be personal in his picture; and proved that his hogs were not churchmen, his mules pretending pedants, his asses Roman nobles, and his birds and beasts of prey the reigning despots of Italy. But, in disdaining personalities — in courageously owning that the hidden sense of his picture was the blindness of fortune, the success of mediocrity, the triumphs of aggression, and the neglect of genius, worth, and independence, in an age at once demoralized and ungifted, though he might have suspended the blow of authority, he could not silence the clamours of the bigoted and the servile; and these continued so loud and so persevering, that even the influence of the house of Ghigi (though one of the brothers was then a cardinal) could not longer have protected him. It was in this moment of disquietude, says one of his anonymous biogra-

phers, " that a sensible change took place in his constitution, naturally full of bile." Abandoned by the idle and the great, whom his delightful talents had so long contributed to amuse, he voluntarily excluded himself from the few true and staunch friends who clung to him in his adversity, at a moment when to be seen in his society carried with it the penalty of proscription. Shutting himself up equally from all he loved and all he despised, he awaited with gloomy and unyielding firmness the completion of his destiny; but an honourable means of escaping from the dungeons of the Inquisition (whither he was hourly expected to be conducted) was afforded him by the interference of a family, whose love of genius and protection of the arts had survived all the sterner virtues which had once distinguished their race.

In this moment of Salvator's deepest despondency, the Prince Giovanni Carlo de' Medici offered him the protection of his brother, the reigning Grand Duke of Tuscany, and urged him to fly to Florence (while the means of

escape were yet in his power), where wealth and honours awaited him as the recompense of his shining and unrivalled talents.* For the friendship of this bold and factious young prelate, Salvator was indebted to Signor Fabrizio

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* "Questo (Salvator) fu condotto dal Cardinale Giovan Carlo a Firenze, e vi stette per sette anni, or poeta, or pittore, or comico applaudito sempre pel suo bello spirito, e frequentato dai letterati, di quali ridondò allora in qualsisia genere di dottrina il paese." "Salvator was conducted to Florence by Card. John Charles, where he stayed seven years, now conspicuous as a poet, now as a painter, and now as a comedian: and always applauded for his wit, and frequented by the literati, which in every branch abound in that country."—*Lanzi*, vol. i. *Scuola Flor.*

This assertion of Lanzi is borne out by all the writers on the subject of Salvator, which the author of these pages has seen, except Passeri, who places Salvator's visit to Florence immediately after his attack upon the private theatricals of Bernini. But honest Passeri, who is an epitome of the confusion and inaccuracy of the Italian writers of the seventeenth century, troubles himself so little with dates, that in his whole Life of Salvator there are but two—the day of the birth, and that of the death of his hero.

Pier Mattei, the diplomatic agent of the Grand Duke, who at that time occupied the Palazzo Madama*, in Rome, one among the most distinguished houses which Rosa had been most accustomed to frequent. To this palace resorted the younger members of the Medici family on their visits of pleasure, business, or ambition, to the papal capital. Signor Fabrizio is described as being "*un galantuomo galante ed intelligente*," alternately the host and the guest of Salvator, and the warmest of his admirers: and it was in his circle that Rosa was first presented to the Prince Giovan Carlo, who was then negotiating for a Cardinal's hat.† The spirit and taste of this prince, who was fitter to be a leader of Condottieri, like his collateral ancestor, than a member of the Conclave, found in the works,

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* So called from its having been built by *Catherine de' Medici*, or, as she was always called in Italy, *Madama Caterina!*

† He was created Cardinal by Innocent X. in 1644-5. For the character of this bustling and ambitious young Prince-Cardinal, see *Memoire de Retz.*

character, and humour of Salvator much that accorded with his own, and he soon conceived for him one of those violent *engouemens*, which the great are apt to mistake for friendship.

This was not the first invitation which Salvator had received to visit the Court of Florence. The Prince Mattei de' Medici * had previously commissioned Signor Fabrizio to induce Rosa to go into Tuscany and execute some great pictures for his own palace, and for the gallery of the Serenissimo himself; but there was something in the arrangement, which was then termed "entering into the service of a prince" ("*portarsi ai servigi*"), from which Salvator's savage love of liberty revolted; and he had so frequently and so publicly made professions of independence and philosophic simplicity of life, that it would have been a derogation from consistency

* *Mattei*, or *Mattias de' Medici*, was governor of Sienna. He was the patron of Livio Mehus, and some other Flemish painters, whom his protection induced to visit Tuscany.

to have *voluntarily* bound himself, like the other great painters of the age, to the particular service of any sovereign.* But, though hitherto

> Free and to none accountable—preferring
> Hard liberty before the easy yoke
> Of servile pomp,—

yet the urgency of his present condition, the intreaties of Fabrizio, his disgust at Roman society†, and the friendship of Cardinal Giovan Carlo, prevailed over these scruples, and induced him to accept an invitation, which

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* Salvator has described these feelings in the following lines of his BABILONIA:—

> Altro non chiesi mai, che viver sano,
> E ne giubila il cuor, nè mi vergogno
> Di guadagnarmi il pan di propria mano.
> A golosi bocconi io non agogno;
> Chi va con fame a mensa, e stracco a letto
> Di piume e di favor non ha bisogno!

† "Insana
Turba de' vivi perfidi, e malvagi,
Senza fè, senza amor, cruda, inumana."

La Guerra.

the first artists of Europe had been proud to obtain.*

Merged in the numerous travelling suite of the prince-prelate, he left Rome, and passed its gates either unobserved of the *sbirri*, which then, as now, guarded its entrance, or by the willing oversight of his persecutors, whose policy may have induced them to wink at the self-banishment of a man whose genius made him an object of European interest, but whose presence was an insult upon the existing order of things.

Ferdinand II., the reigning Archduke of Tuscany, had been a disciple of Galileo, who had added the "*Stelle Medicie*"† to the heavenly bodies; he was also the founder of the *Accademia del Cimento*, and loved the arts and sciences not as a mere "*Mecenate*," but as a

* "In tali noiose circonstanze venutagli l'occasione di portarsi ai servigi della corta di Toscana, &c. &c."—*Vita di Rosa, tratta di vari Autori.*

† The four satellites of Jupiter, discovered by Galileo in the reign of Cosmo II.

professor. It was to this prince, and to his brother the Cardinal Leopold, that Florence, in the middle of the seventeenth century, owed much of the scientific character, by which her elegant, but something pedantic, society was then distinguished.*

At the moment that Salvator left Rome for Florence, the Palazzo Pitti, the palace of the Medici, was an open study, where the greatest masters of the age had recently worked, or were still working. Albano's voluptuous imagery was still wet upon the walls of that precious cabinet, consecrated to the *pious* meditations of Cardinal Giovan Carlo, who had seduced the Anacreon of painting from the luxurious retreat of the "*Medola*" in the Bolognese.

* Among the precious contributions of Ferdinand and Leopold to the gallery of Florence are the fine heads of Cicero, the bronze idol, supposed to be one of the finest specimens of ancient art in the world, Titian's Venus, most of the valuable portraits, and the works of Salvator.

The sad and saintly Carlo Dolce, who had solemnly vowed his pencil to the Virgin*, left his cell of Saint Benedict to supply the oratories and chapel of the *Pitti* with crucified Saviours and "*Madri delle sette dolori*;" and Pietro da Cortona, who had already established his sect of the "*Cortoneschi*," had abandoned the patronage of the Barberini (whose self-assumed virtues he had eternized on the walls

* Carlo Dolce not only dedicated his pencil to the Virgin (as Tartini did his violin to St. Anthony of Padua), but made a solemn vow never to paint any but sacred subjects. His Madonnas, however, were all portraits of Maria Madelina Baldinucci. Carlo Dolce was a member of the Compagnia di San Benedetto, a very rigid congregation. He was the victim, says Baldinucci, of a pertinacious melancholy, which at times made it impossible to obtain a word from him: all his answers were sighs. On the day of his wedding, when the company were met for the ceremony, he was no where to be found. At last he was discovered in the church of the Annunziata, prostrate on the steps of the great altar, before a crucifix.

of their Roman palace), in order to enrich that noble suite of rooms in the Pitti palace, which are still dedicated to his name and labours.*

These were great names to compete with, in a professional point of view; and their splendour and their vogue were sufficient to intimidate one whose harassed and worn spirit rendered him peculiarly susceptible to all disheartening impressions. But from the first

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* Pietro da Cortona came to Florence in 1640, by the special invitation of the Grand Duke Ferdinand II. While working on the apartment called "The Mercury," he took some disgust to the Florentine Court, and, returning hastily to Rome, sent his excuses to the Grand Duke. His paintings were finished by his pupil, Ciro Ferri. But before he departed, he had formed a new school at Florence, which was "*acclamato da' più autorevoli professori*," (applauded by the most highly considered professors). In conjunction with the Padre Ottonelli, a jesuit, he wrote a book on painting and sculpture, now become extremely scarce: it was published in Florence, 1652.

glance which Salvator Rosa obtained of that

"Arno gentile d' ogni grazia ornato"—

from the first view of those cupolas and spires which rose above the tombs of Michael Angelo and Machiavel, and recalled the memory of Dante and of Petrarch, the spirits of the fugitive appear to have resumed their finest tone of brilliant exhilaration. The land of song, of poesy, and of painting, never received within her bosom a more devoted and enthusiastic pilgrim. The fame of the painter, poet, musician, philosopher, and dramatist, had long preceded his arrival. The villas of his dear friends the Maffei and the Ricciardi cheered his eyes, and gave him the first welcome on his route. Some of his best pictures already decorated the walls of the Florentine houses. His cantatas had floated on the classic waves of the Arno, and had "furnished forth" many a serenata beneath the casements of the *Piazza del Duomo* and *Della Santa Croce;* and many an old stager

of the little academic theatres of Tuscany longed to break a lance with the far-famed Coviello of the Roman Carnival.

The departure of Salvator from Rome was an escape: his arrival in Florence was a triumph. The Grand Duke and the princes of his house received him, not as an hireling, but, as he had frankly painted himself,—as one whose principles and genius placed him beyond the possibility of dependence.* An annual income was assigned to him, during his residence in Florence, in the service of the Court†, besides a stipulated price for each of his pictures: and he was left perfectly unconstrained, and at liberty to paint for whom else he pleased.

The princes, says Passeri, received him "*con amorevolezza, e ne faceva stima grande, trattendolo assai onorevolmente, si nelle provvisioni come*

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* "Un galantuomo son io d'una natura
Che al par di Menedemo," &c. &c.—*Satiri.*

† Pascoli calls this pension "*grosso annuale stipendio.*"

nella cortesia" (with affection, and esteemed him highly, treating him with great honour, both in pecuniary matters and in courtesy.)

The character, in fact, the manners, and the talents of Salvator, came out in strong relief, as opposed to the servile deportment and more professional acquirements of the herd of artists of all nations, then under the protection of the Medici. He was received at the Palazzo Pitti not only as an artist, but as a guest; and the Medici, at whose board Pulci (in the time of their Magnifico) had sung his Morgante Maggiore with the fervour of a rhapsodist, now received at their table another Improvvisatore *, with equal courtesy and graciousness. The Tuscan nobility, in imitation of the court, and in the desire to possess Salvator's pictures,

* The Orlando Inamorato of Boiardo was sung in the same manner at the table of the D'Este; and Carolan, the last of the Irish bards, rhapsodized in the halls of the O'Connors so lately as the year 1730.

treated him with singular honour.* The Capponi, the Gerini, the Corsini, the Guadagni, and the Falconieri, are mentioned among his particular intimates and among the candidates for his works and his society. Immediately on his arrival at Florence, Salvator took a large and commodious house in the *Croce al Trebio, al canto di Cini,* and he furnished it handsomely according to the taste of that day. In the excitement of one suddenly raised from the dark broodings of despondency, he dashed at once into a new career, more consonant to his epicurean temperament, than to his system of stoical philosophy. "Salvator," says Passeri, "who was always of the most generous and lofty spirit, and was desirous of a great name and reputation, resolved to place himself upon an equal footing with the cavaliers of the court, whom he frequently entertained with the most sumptuous banquets, which cost him from

* "I nobili, che a gara facevano onore e cortesie, per aver suoi quadri."—*Pascoli.*

thirty to fifty scudi a time; and in truth those lords accepted of his hospitable invitations with right good will." The fact thus simply detailed, may well be believed, when it is known that the "*lautissime cene, ricchi pranzi,*" (sumptuous suppers and rich dinners) consisted of the rarest and most exquisite viands; and that one, who from habit lived sparingly, and whose favourite dish was fresh figs*, was yet well aware that his brilliant conversation was best relished when accompanied by beccaficos and ortolans, his bon-mots more greedily swallowed when washed down with the juice of the Tuscan grape, or the wines of Burgundy. But while the ennobled descendants of the merchant-citizens of republican Florence were feasted by the hospitality, and amused by the wit, of their plebeian host, they never for a moment lost sight of the immeasurable distance existing between those

* Baldinucci says, that if a basket of this fruit arrived from the country, when Salvator was engaged to some luxurious dinner, he was sure to send his excuse and sit down to his fresh figs at home.

whom fortune had distinguished, and the man who boasted only of the aristocracy of nature: and the Eccellentissimi, Eminentissimi, and Serenissimi who deigned to partake of feasts provided by the honest earnings of genius and industry, smiled in derision at the vanity of the *low-born artist* who sought to surround himself with scarlet hats and purple stockings, mitres, coronets, ribbons, and stars, and all the masquerading panoply, which policy has adopted, to make a false and ludicrous distinction between man and man. Unluckily for the titled guests of Rosa, they smiled not unobserved! Not a glance of the eye, not a scornful curvature of the lip, not a movement of the elevated brow, escaped the never-erring perceptions of genius, sharpened in all its faculties by a suspicious and wounded self-love.

Salvator was promptly struck with a sense of his weakness; and his discovery was confirmed by an incident, extremely characteristic of his position as a low-born man of talent coming in contact with the heartlessness and bad taste so

often discoverable in the spoiled children of fortune, whose society his vanity had urged him to cultivate. Proceeding to the Corso in his carriage, after one of his own sumptuous dinners, he perceived that some of those noble guests who had the most eagerly accepted his invitation, and on that very day had partaken of his hospitality, turned away to avoid his salutation, in a spot where so many of their own caste were present to witness the "Good den, Sir Richard," of the familiar artist. This conviction sunk so deeply into his irritable mind, that many years afterwards, when residing in Rome, he frequently related the anecdote to Passeri with unabated bitterness of spirit *.

* "E quando, ritornò in Roma, mi disse più volte, che quei Cavalieri ai quali faceva tante cortesie, nel medesimo giorno dopo il desinare, incontrandolo per lo passeggio in carozze, e vedendolo, ni meno gli guardavono adosso."—"And when he returned to Rome, he often told me, that those nobles to whom he had shewn so much hospitality, meeting him in their carriages even on the very day on which he had feasted them, refused to look upon and salute him."—*Passeri.*

Salvator's knowledge of the degraded nobility of Rome and Naples had long led him to remark,

" How low, how little are the great, how indigent the proud!"

but he probably expected something better from the descendants of the free citizens of Florence. In this, however, he was disappointed; and his opinions of this class live in his works for generations yet unborn, while the insipid mystifications of the wits of the Tuscan red-book died where they fell *. From the moment that Rosa was aware of his folly, he shut his door against all who had nothing but mere rank or courtly fashion to recommend them. Far, however, from abandoning society, he only selected it. His extravagant hospitality was not reformed; but it was directed to better purposes; and the Poloniuses of the palace Pitti,

* Salvator observes in his letters, " Their fire is of straw, mine is asbestos."—The conceit is not quite correct, but the expression is forcible.

the little courtiers of a little court—the worst of all society,—gave place to whatever professional talent, wit, worth, or genius, Florence could at that time boast of possessing within her walls. The cold etiquette and courtly ceremony of his guests of many quarterings and few ideas was banished from his table, and was succeeded by freedom, intellectual vivacity, and that playful ease, which is only to be enjoyed by superior minds, in the gracious consciousness of a full and perfect equality. From that moment, as Baldinucci observes, the house of Salvator became "an academy of wits, the habitation of hilarity, and the mart of gaiety *."

In addition to the principal artists and literati of Tuscany, whatever was the most distinguished of the higher ranks for taste and talent, was to be seen in Salvator's weekly assemblies. The accomplished Count Maffei, the poetical

* "Un accademia delle belle facultade, l'abitazione della giocondità, ed il mercato della allegrezza."

Duke di Salviati, Cardinal Baldinelli, all visitants in the Via Babbuina at Rome, were likewise congregated in the "Croce del Trebio" at Florence. To the possessors of these historical names were added, many now well known to science and to art: Torricelli, the celebrated inventor of the barometer, the learned Andrea Cavalcante, Francesco Rovai, one of the few amusing rhimers among the Seicentisti, Valerio Chimentelli, professor of moral philosophy at Pisa, his successor Battista Ricciardi, then only known as an agreeable poet, the learned Dottore Berni, the facetious Paole Vendremini, secretary of state to the Venetian republic, (then on a diplomatic mission at the court of Tuscany,) Filippo Apollone Aretino, a fashionable dramatist, Salvetti, a literato of eminence and poet of society, Minucci, afterwards the editor of the "Malmantile," and Lorenzo Lippi, the author of that poem, (one of the most playful and burlesque productions of the age,) who, in all probability, would not have written it, had

he never known Salvator Rosa. The brightest triumphs of genius are not unfrequently the results of accident; and it is a strange coincidence, that Milton also received the first ideas of his *Paradise Lost*, in those very circles in which Salvator now presided *

To the distinguished persons mentioned by name as the constant guests of Salvator Rosa, many of a nearly equal merit, though of less note, were from time to time added, until their

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* The first hint of the *Paradise Lost* is said to have been taken from an Italian tragedy. Many of the persons who formed Salvator's society must have been members of those academies, which paid such respect to Milton on his visit to Florence some years before.

"For besides the curiosities and other beauties of the place (Florence), he (Milton) took great delight in the company and conversation there, and frequented their academies, as they are called, the meetings of the most polite and ingenious persons, which they have in this, as well as in the other principal cities of Italy, for the exercise and improvement of wit and learning amongst them."—*Life of Milton.*

number, talent, and learning, and the nature of their well-sustained conversations, induced him to propose the formation of an academy, which, by the name of the "*Percossi*," soon became one of the most celebrated and brilliant of Italy. It was not, however, conversation alone that gave its rapid vogue to the Percossi, but circumstances always in accordance with the taste of every nation—good cheer and pleasurable amusement, private theatricals, followed by the most exquisite suppers. The desire expressed to see Salvator in some of his dramatic characters, together with the notoriety of the histrionic talents of other members of the society, induced the new-formed academy to give a series of dramatic representations during some months in every year; and the idea was so much relished by the *elegantes* of Florence, that Cardinal Leopold de' Medici lent his beautiful Casino di San Marco for a theatre.*

* It may be observed, *en passant*, that there is scarcely an heroic subject presented by history, which

The pieces performed on this occasion (and they have been cited as being "*bellissime e bizzarissime commedie al improvviso,*") were composed and acted exclusively by the academicians, with one exception in favour of a certain Messer Francesco Maria Agli, a Bolognese merchant, who in the character of "*Il Dottore,*" the representative of the pedantry of the Bolognese university, was celebrated as the high priest "*and darling without end,*" of Thalia. It had long been the ambition of Agli to enter the lists with Salvator; and though at this time a sexagenary, the old mer-

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had not been seized upon by the Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before they were treated by the tragedians of France. The "Fedra" of Bosca, the "Medea" of Galladea, the "Mariamne" of Dolce, the "Semiramide" of Manfredi, the "Aristodemo" of Dottori, the "Cleopatra" of Spinello, the "Œdipo" of Anguillara, and a hundred others written before the middle of the seventeenth century, were anticipations of Corneille, Voltaire, Monti, &c. &c. The "Merope" of Scipione Maffei preceded that of Voltaire, of which it must be considered the parent.

chant doffed the cap and slippers of his counting-house in the Piazza del Gigante, ordered oxen to his Cariola, and abandoning the ledger for the sock, crossed the Apennines, to offer his services to the PERCOSSI, by whom he was most graciously received. Salvator thus met with one, who, in technical language, could "act up to him," and when they appeared together on the boards of San Marco,—the one as *the Doctor*, ponderous, prosing and pedantic,—the other as the Neapolitan *Valet de place*, sharp, roguish, and rapid,—their farcical *qui pro quos*, arising out of the different dialects, which both spoke to perfection, had such an effect, that the dialogue was frequently interrupted by the reiterated shouts of laughter, which burst from the audience.*

* "Che le rise che alzavansi fra gli spettatori per lungo spazio interompavano il loro dialogo."

—"For my part," says Baldinucci, "I was always afraid that these violent convulsions of laughter, would some time or other have had a fatal termination."

From this period, to the end of his life, the histrionic merchant of Bologna came annually to Florence, for the pleasure of playing the Doctor Graziano to Salvator's Pascariello.* But the comic performances of SAN MARCO were not exclusively *al improvviso*, being occasionally relieved by others of more regular composition, styled "*al soggetto nobile e grave*," written by Carlo Dati, the friend of Milton, by Ricciardi and other writers, whose clerical habits forbade their contributing to the lighter amusements of the theatre. Viviani, a mathematician of great note in his day, took the low comedy part of Pasquella; Count Luigi Ridolfi personated the thick-witted clown Schitirzi; and the "Nobil-uomo" Francesco Cordino, exchanged his doublet and hose for a cap and farthingale, and figured as the intriguing chambermaid Colombina. As no

* At this period, Moliere was performing in his own Etourdi and Les Précieuses at Beziers, before the little Court of the Prince de Conti.

females were at this time permitted to appear on the stage, the other heroines were committed to some young and handsome abbés, who filled up the *corps dramatique* of the Percossi. To give the last finish to these elegant theatricals, the Prince-prelate, Giovan Carlo*, presided indirectly over them; and the Count Giulio Altoviti, the representative of one of the most illustrious families of Tuscany, undertook the post of *Direttore*, or acting manager; though he was often on the point of throwing up his office, from his inability to withstand the importunities of the Florentine gentry for admissions, beyond all proportion to the dimensions of his theatre.

The suppers which followed these representations, and which, according to the pedantry of the times, bore the name of "*Simposi*," were always given at the house of Salvator; and though the academicians professed to con-

* In 1659, this Cardinal built a regular theatre at Florence, for the representation of operas.

tribute some part of the expense, yet, in the end, the whole weight fell upon the munificent artist, who is described as having displayed great taste in the *getting-up* of these singular festivities. The apartments opened into gardens, and were lined with trees and odoriferous plants. The very floors were concealed by verdant mosses and natural flowers; and the whole was so picturesquely arranged, that it appeared a natural, and not an artificial bower, shaded by the freshest and most delicious foliage. The table partook of the singularity of one who, says a French critic on these occasions, "*mettoit de l'esprit par tout;*" and the choice viands, by appearing in masquerade, while they did justice to the cook, displayed much of the *concetti* of the age and country, from which even this wild son of the Apennines was not wholly exempt.*

* "A most whimsical thing it was to behold the arrangement of the table on the occasion of these Simposi. Some nights all the dishes were masked in pastry, even to

On these occasions, Salvator occasionally recited some parts of his Satires, and sang those spirited compositions to his lute in his native Neapolitan*, which as provincial ballads, in the absence of all pretension, met with more indulgence from his Della Cruscan auditory, than was given to the anti-Tuscanisms of his graver poems.

To supply the extravagant claims which Salvator's liberal spirit was daily making on his purse, required, in the midst of all his intellectual and social enjoyments, great industry and inordinate gains. But his love of glory was paramount to every passion; and if his nights were given to recreation and society, his days were passed in labour and solitude. Shut

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the sallad; on others, all were roasts—on others, soups, &c.; and much pretty and curious invention was displayed in thus giving an endless variety to the appearances and tastes of the same meats."—*Life*, &c.

* "Spiritose canzoni, che cantava in lingua Napolitana graziosamente sul liuto."—*Pascoli*.

up in his "fast closed chambers," (*"ben chiuse stanze,"* as Baldinucci calls his work-rooms,) to which not even his own pupils were admitted, he worked with his usual rapidity, and with more than ordinary success. The first picture which he executed after his arrival in Florence, was his far-famed Battle-piece, for the Grand Duke Ferdinand, in which, at his highness's request, he introduced his own portrait in one of the corners. All Tuscany offered the homage of unqualified admiration before this splendid composition, which was followed by several landscapes, sea-ports, marine views, (mostly taken from the mountain coast scenery of the Abruzzi,) all bespoken, and liberally paid for by the Grand Duke, or his brothers Leopold and Giovan Carlo.

He felt himself, however, so little bound to work exclusively for these princes, that he occasionally permitted their orders to wait upon the commissions given by his own friends; and he painted successively, his "Heraclitus

and Democritus" for Francesco Cordone*; four landscapes for the Marchese Capponi†, "which," says Baldinucci, "were perfectly beautiful *(di tutte bellezze)*"; and for the Marchese Gerini, his "Sage flinging treasures into the Ocean," and a "Fortune" covering her eyes with one hand, while with the other she scatters gold at random. His well-known piece called "Ancient Ruins," was painted for the Casa Grisoli; and what is still called "Salvator's grand landscape" (in which, says Baldinucci, *he surpassed himself*,) for the Marchese Guadagni. The price given for this last magnificent picture is always quoted as exorbitant; and Baldinucci states, that all the pictures which he sold at Florence were purchased at the very highest prices. It was, however, remarked that of those pictures

* These pictures are known by the name of "The Laughing and Crying Philosophers." See Catalogue, vol. 2.

† Still preserved in the Capponi palace at Florence.

which were executed while he resided in Tuscany, his best were such as he painted as presents for his most favoured friends. One of the most precious of these was his own portrait, done for a Florentine citizen, Messer Signorelli. This portrait represents him in his character of Pascariello; and it is remarkable for the hands being covered by what Baldinucci calls "*guanti stracciati.*" On the demise of Signorelli, it passed into the collection of Cardinal Leopold de' Medici.

Besides these various works, Salvator contrived from time to time to execute some great pictures for himself, ("*per proprio studio,*") which it was his pride and his vengeance to send to Rome, on the annual exhibition in the Pantheon, where the public beheld with increasing admiration the works of a man whose person was proscribed, but whose genius was beyond the reach of bans and bulls.* "Among

* Salvator Rosa secretly deplored his banishment; and

these, the most remarkable was a Bacchanalian piece, full of poetical imagery. It represented a dark forest gloomed by the interweaving of trees, through which a vista appeared, whose termination was lost in the distance; while, in an opening, a group of male and

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his impatience at being separated from Carlo Rossi, and some other of his friends was so great, that he narrowly escaped losing his liberty to obtain an interview with them. About three years after his arrival in Florence, he took post-horses, and at midnight set off for Rome. Having reached the gardens of the "Vigna Navicella," and bribed the *custode* to lend them for a few hours, and otherwise to assist him, he despatched a circular billet to eighteen of his friends, supplicating them to give him a rendezvous at the Navicella. Each believed that Salvator had fallen into some new difficulty which had obliged him to fly from Florence, and all attended his summons. He received them at the head of a well-furnished table, embraced them with tenderness, feasted them sumptuously, and then mounting his horse, returned to Florence before his Roman persecutors, or Tuscan friends, were aware of his adventure.

female figures with children, all lightly habited with draperies floating in the air, frolicked round a statue of Bacchus. Others lay on the earth, drinking from vases and goblets; and some rolled in drunkenness, in a variety of the most appropriate attitudes. The composition was admirable, the scenery finely adapted to the grouping, and the shadows of the trees, by the exercise of a rare skill, were made to harmonize with the general tone of colouring: the whole picture was most singular. Others which he sent, were also in good style. They consisted of landscapes, battle-pieces, marine views, and historical subjects; all original, masterly, and spirited in the most eminent degree."

But, while thus laboriously devoted to business and to pleasure, insatiate in the pursuit of fame, and seeking to obtain it alike from contemporaries and from posterity by the cul-

* Passeri, p. 425.

tivation of the most opposite talents; his susceptible spirits too frequently sunk under the exertions of his overworked mind; and fits of moody melancholy, the natural concomitants of the disease called genius, shadowed the settled sunshine of this portion of his life, and left him no solace but such as he could find in solitude or in friendship. Long and lonely walks amidst the forest gloom of Volterra, or pensive saunterings in the more lovely scenery of the Val d' Arno, with the friend of his most intimate selection, were the sure remedies to which he applied, when his temperament led him to view life in its own true colours, or when, the fervour of some transient excitement having died away, he felt a full conviction of the truth of his painted adage "*Nasci pena*, &c. &c. &c." succeed to every brighter dream and more flattering illusion.

The friend *par excellence*, chosen to accompany him in these wanderings, was Lorenzo

Lippi,* a man who seems to have been cast in the same mould with himself, though formed perhaps of an inferior clay. A painter by profession, a poet by taste, a philosopher upon system, and an epicurean from temperament: he yet was all these in a lower degree than Salvator; and this very inequality rendered their accordance but the more perfect: for Lippi looked up to Rosa; and Rosa liked to be respected, even by those by whom he was beloved. There was also another point of similitude

* Lorenzo Lippi is described as having been "Spiritoso nei motti, bizarro nelle resoluzioni, faceto e vivace nel conversare, e poet anel suo genere di rara capacità." "Brilliant in wit, capricious in act, facetious and lively in conversation, and a poet, in his own peculiar style, of great ability. (Vita, &c.) According to Baldinucci, he was a man of the best morals, affectionate and charitable. I cannot find that Salvator had a single friend, that was not as eminent for moral worth, as for talent and acquirements.

between these eminent geniuses: they were both alive

"To every sense of ridicule in things;"

and both indulged in the dangerous propensity with a most hazardous indiscretion; too happy when they could laugh at a world, over which they were more frequently compelled to weep.

It occasionally happened that, when Salvator, after an hard day's work, felt both his strength and spirits flag, he hastened to the studio of Lippi, and pulling him forcibly from the scaffold, on which he was then painting his great picture of the "Triumph of David,"* carried him off to walk,—when saunterings

* In this picture, painted for the Count Agnolo Galli, the portraits of the Count, of Madelina his wife, and their seventeen beautiful children, are preserved. David, holding the head of Goliath, represented Lorenzo de' Galli, a singularly handsome youth; and the mother and her daughters appeared as "the fairest among the daughters of the children of Israel." Lippi, like Salvator, was an open contemner of schools and manners. He always studied from nature.

which began at the Ave Maria, were continued till the midnight-bell of many a convent tolled its monks to their nocturnal devotions.* Sometimes the wanderers directed their steps like Galileo,—"*the Tuscan Artist*,"—to the top of Fiesole; but not solely to view "the moon's broad circumference," or

"Descry new lands,
"Rivers, and mountains in her spotty globe;"

but to gaze on the scenery of the Decameron, the Mugnone, the Villa di Sciffanoja, and the other features of a scene consecrated to the Novellatrici of Boccace, an author who was

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* Lippi might have rivalled any modern English pedestrian. "One morning at dinner, he suddenly took it into his head to go to Prato, a town ten miles distant from Florence; so, starting from table, he arrived at Prato, saluted some of his friends, and returned home to finish his meal." Baldinucci says, that he died the victim of his "indefatigable walking:" having made one of his usual tours in very hot weather, he was attacked with pleurisy, and perished in his fifty-eighth year, about 1652.

of their own school, and whom posterity classes among the earliest founders of the sect of Romanticism.*

Sometimes the ramblers took the road to Pisa, which lies under the Poggio di San Romolo, and visited the pretty villa of their mutual friend Alfonso Parigi, a kinsman of Lippi. Seated in the marble portico of this villa (La Mazzetta), the eyes of the two painters fell naturally upon the Castle of Malmantile, an object whose picturesque beauty was singularly calculated to attract their attention.†

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* Baldinucci relates, that these two humorous friends standing on a little bridge over the Arno, used to amuse themselves with the ignorance of the country people, by passing off their own figures, reflected in the water, as *the Antipodes*.

† Malmantile stood about ten miles from Florence, on the road to Pisa, between La Lastra and Montelupo. The word signifies, in the Tuscan dialect, an old table-cloth or tapestry; and "Andar al Malmantile" is a proverb tantamount to "dining with Duke Humphrey."

Malmantile crowned the heights of a neighbouring hill, at about a mile from Parigi's villa; and Lippi had not only made this ruin the goal of his morning walk, on his visits to his kinsman, but likewise the subject of some doggrel rhimes, which he was in the habit of stringing together with great facility. In these idle and unstudied lines Salvator Rosa saw so much wit and humour, that he prevailed on Lippi to give the subject a more serious consideration, and to render them the medium of an attack upon those self-styled "*Rettorici Atticisti*" who swarmed forth from the Della Cruscan school, to the total destruction of all good taste and manly literature.*

These persecutors of Tasso, these "*quindi*

* "Grandissimi furono gli stimoli che egli ebbe a cio fare da Salvator Rosa."—*Baldinucci.*

He adds, that they lived in "*intrinseca domestichezza,*" in great intimacy, and that it was in Salvator's house that Lippi first read his poem.

*e quinci"** *(whilomes and whereofs)* had already been attacked with equal humour and severity by Salvator in his "*Poesia*," and he now not only strenuously encouraged his friend to execute his poem upon a grand scale, but furnished almost all the episodes, which were taken from the popular tales of the Neapolitan people.

The high burlesque poem of "*Il Malmantile raquistato*" is executed in strict imitation of the sublime *Gerusalemme* of Tasso, and its mock-heroic march is admirably contrasted with the low and familiar imagery in which it abounds, and which is given in the obsolete and vulgar idioms, and popular proverbs of Tuscany†; a taste which was then first affected

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* "Peggio non ho che quel sentir parlare
Con tanti *quinci* e *quindi*."—*Anton. Abbati.*

† Much of the effect of this poem is now lost; but Baldinucci says, that the adaptation of the proverbs to its conceits was so humorous, that it could not be read without laughter.

by the *purists* of Florence, the precursors of the "Trecentisti" of the present day. To add to the humour of this whimsical composition, the puerile tales of the nursery, and *les petits jeux* afterwards so much in fashion in France, were introduced in a variety of digressions and allusions*; and the whole was a satire upon the flimsy literature which in the seventeenth century succeeded to the prose of Machiavel, and the poetry of Ariosto.

The "Malmantile raquistato" di Perlone Zipole (the anagram of Lorenzo Lippi) was at last completed; and long before its publication,

* The simple Minucci, the friend of Rosa, and the commentator on Lippi, enters in his insipid tittle-tattle ("*insipide chiaccherie*," as modern writers term his notes) into a grave discussion on these nursery tales, and gives a whole chapter to "The little old man's alive," and to the well-known game,

Becci calla, calla, calla,
Quanti corni ha la cavalla?—

or "Buck, buck, how many horns do I hold up?" a game mentioned, be it recorded *en passant*, in Petronius Arbiter.

the MS. was so eagerly sought after, and so rapturously applauded, that its success was unprecedented. It became even more the fashion in France and in England, than in Italy, where its satire was too severely felt not to raise against its author an host of critics and of enemies*. When Lorenzo Panteatiche was presented to Louis XIV., his pompous majesty *rubbed up* his Italian, learnt at the feet of the Mancini, to say something civil of *il Malmantile* to the reverend traveller, and addressed him with "*Signore Abate, io sto legendo il vostro grazioso Malmantile.*" And the melancholy Charles I. of England received the same personage with the MS. of the Malmantile lying open on his table, and his finger pointing to its *title*-page. The allusions, however, of this once fashionable poem are too local to

* Lippi's sole successful rivals were, Francesco Bracciolino, author of "Lo Scherno degli Dei," and Alessandro Tassoni, author of the well-known Secchia Rapita.

perpetuate its interest; and the antique Tuscanisms, in which it abounds, are now so wholly gone by, that it is not read with much amusement and facility even in Italy, or by the Tuscans themselves.

The aid which Lippi received from the higher genius of Salvator was not confined to his literary pursuits. His "Flight into Egypt" owes to the good-natured assistance of Rosa's pencil, that it was ever finished to contribute to the fame of its author. It happened that Rosa, in one of those fits of idleness to which even his strenuous spirit was occasionally liable, flung down his pencil, and sallied forth to communicate the infection of his *far niente* to his friend Lippi. On entering his studio, however, he found him labouring with great impetuosity on the back-ground of this picture; but in such sullen vehemence, or in such evident ill-humour, that Salvator demanded, "*Che fai, amico?*"—"What am I about?" said Lippi; "I am going mad with vexation. Here is one of

my best pictures ruined; I am under a spell, and cannot even draw the branch of a tree, nor a tuft of herbage."

"Signore Dio!" exclaimed Rosa, twisting the palette off his friend's thumb, "what colours are here?" and scraping them off, and gently pushing away Lippi, he took his place, murmuring, "Let me see! who knows but I may help you out of the scrape*."

* Rosa's confidence in his powers was as frankly confessed as it was justified by success. Happening one day to be found by a friend in Florence in the act of modulating on a very indifferent old harpsichord, he was asked, how he could keep such an instrument in his house? "Why," said his friend, "it is not worth a scudo."—"I will lay you what you please," said Salvator, "that it shall be worth a thousand before you see it again." A bet was made, and Rosa immediately painted a landscape with figures on the lid, which not only was sold for a thousand scudi, but was esteemed a "capo d'opera." On one end of the harpsichord he also painted a skull and music books. Both these pictures were exhibited this year, 1823, at the British Institution.

Half in jest, and half in earnest, he began to touch and retouch, and change, till night-fall found him at the easel finishing one of the best back-ground landscapes he ever painted. All Florence came the next day to look at this *chef-d'œuvre*, and the first artists of the age took it as a study.

A few days afterwards, Salvator calling upon Lippi, found him preparing a canvass, while Malatesti read aloud to him and Ludovico Seranai the astronomer, the MS. of his poem of the Sphynx. Salvator, with a noiseless step, took his seat in an old gothic window, and placing himself in a listening attitude, with a bright light falling through stained glass upon his fine head, produced a splendid study, of which Lippi, without a word of his intention, availed himself; and he executed, with incredible rapidity, the finest picture of Salvator that was ever painted. Several copies of it were taken with Lippi's permission, and Ludovico Seranai purchased the original at a considerable price.

" In this picture Salvator is dressed in a cloth habit, with richly slashed sleeves, turnovers, and a collar. It is only a head and bust, and the eyes are looking towards the spectator*."

While the character of Salvator stood as high in public opinion for its unblemished probity, as it was singular in such times for its stern independence—while his associates were chosen among the most refined, and his friends among the most intelligent classes of society, there was yet one vulnerable point about him, which the truth of biographical story will not permit to be glossed over, but which the sex of the biographer renders it perilous to touch on.

The master-frailty of Salvator's life was that, which the world as readily pardons in one sex, as it condemns in the other;—a venial sin in all

* Baldinucci says of it, " era tanto bello e somigliante, che poi ne furono fatti assai copie, una delle quale si conservo appresso da me per memoria del Rosa." " It was so beautiful and so like, that many copies of it were afterwards made, one of which I keep in my possession in memory of Salvator."

countries whose political and religious institutions are unfavourable to the virtues essential to domestic happiness. To enter into details of the amatory adventures of one, whose enterprising spirit in love and in politics, in the tower of Masaniello and the saloons of Rome and Florence, was equally audacious, would, to say the least, be an ill-judged accuracy. That the gallantry of Salvator furnished his enemies with the ground-work of those calumnies, which stamped on him the reputation of a libertine, cannot be denied. But if, in

"His morn and liquid dew of youth,"

he had "*fatto come tanti altri,*" "sinned like so many others," it is at least some extenuation of his offence, that he never lent the spell of his genius to the errors of his example. With the exception of a few short erotic poems, which have all the purity, if not all the poetry, of Petrarch, his works make no allusion to his loves; and neither record the amatory triumphs of his youth, nor the feeble contrition of his decline. He evidently indeed scorned the com-

mon trick of drawing the world's attention to his productions, by rendering them subservient to its grosser appetites, and to his own egotism; and, blushing to find *that* fame which so many have made their proudest boast, he seems to have been one who

"Comblé de faveurs,
Sache les gouter——et les taire."

That epoch in the life of man was now, however, rapidly arriving, when the senses, less vagrant and prompt to kindle than in youth, become concentrated; and when the passions, sobered to a capacity for fixed and settled affection, call for some suitable object to receive their permanent and exclusive devotion. Salvator had already begun to feel this truth; and he ought to have married. But, when urged to enter into matrimonial engagements, he pleaded reasons for rejecting the counsels of his friends, which, though by a strange perversion of the moral sense, founded in a rigid feeling of delicacy and sentimental

fastidiousness, led him in the end to act in a manner but little consonant with the dictates of either. The demoralized state of Italian society, at that particular period, made over the virtue of chastity exclusively to religious recluses and monastic devotees; and while one sex professed the most open libertinism, the other was divided into nuns and concubines. Salvator, with some of that Spanish jealousy then inherent in the Neapolitans of all classes, was averse from forming any tie which might link him for life to the possible frailty of the "thing he loved;" and in his sore susceptibility of that ridicule which he had himself lavished on husbands, by necessity "very, very, very kind, indeed," he forbore to enroll himself in their order. In his times, as in the present, and in those countries in which celibacy is consecrated by the religion of the land, human frailty has found its account in winking at a custom, whose observance was in full force in Italy during the seventeenth cen-

tury. A fair female domestic, with the title of *governante,* was then an universal appendage in the establishment of the unmarried, whether clerical or laic: and even the Vatican was not exempt from such an arrangement.

While Innocent X. consigned the keys of St. Peter to the keeping of *Donna Olympia,* it gave but little offence to public morals that Salvator consigned his to the fair hands of a beautiful Florentine girl, whom this connexion has rendered celebrated by the name of La Signora Lucrezia!

The introduction of Salvator to "*La Donna di bello aspetto*" was connected with his art. Lucrezia, who, though poor, was a person of some education and respectability, had been induced to sit as the original of some of Salvator's nymphs, saints, and Pythonesses, and to become his model, without any disparagement to her modesty or discretion: for Salvator had fallen, with a puritanical severity, upon the prurient representations even of the

first masters (and, above all, on his own favourite's, ALBANO); and this circumstance rendered him infinitely cautious to make his own works examples of that decency he so strenuously preached to others. "In respect to this branch of his art," says Passeri, "in which a truly *Christian painter* should be most careful, he was a most rigorous observer*; avoiding all indelicacy, or whatever might inspire it, and attending to this with his usual modesty, even in his picture which represents the allurements of Phryne and the continence of *Xenocrates:* for, in defiance of the necessities of the story, he has completely veiled her, and scarcely left more than a part of the left arm naked†."

From simply considering the young Lucrezia as a fine model, with the same coldness with which Pygmalion first watched the pro-

* "*Rigorosissimo custode*" are Passeri's words.

† The picture here alluded to is now in the collection of the Earl of Besborough.

gress of his own statue, Salvator, like the Greek sculptor, soon sighed to animate the forms he gazed on, with that soul which passion only gives—and, too soon, succeeded! The account given of their connexion, by the reverend father Passeri, ("*uomo di soda pietà*, says a modern biographer*,) though brief, is curious, as coming from a priest; and it is highly illustrative of the manners of the age. "While in Florence," says the *Padre*, "Salvator entered into an intimate friendship with a lady of great beauty, whom he had in the first instance taken as his model, and who afterwards became his constant companion and solace, though not

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* "*A man of confirmed piety.*" Passeri, though a painter, was a priest, celebrated mass, and was promoted to the station of a vicar choral in the collegiate church of *Santa Maria in Vico Lato*, by his patron, Cardinal Alluri. Passeri retired to a sort of monastic cell, where he lived and died like a hermit, in 1679, having survived his friend Salvator but seven years.

always laudably or innocently so. But as his lady loved him much, and was full of good qualities, he resolved never to abandon her; nor did either ever after think of parting from the other."

When, therefore, Lucrezia took her place in the domestic establishment of Salvator Rosa, with the title of "Sua Governante," though his graver friends might have lamented the nature of the connexion, his guests paid her all that respect, which in free countries is reserved exclusively for the "wedded dame;" and Salvator himself offered her that sort of guarded attention, which men whose passions and moral sense are at variance, are wont to pay to the object which occasions the struggle.*

* At the distance of sixteen years from this epoch, Salvator, writing to his friend the Abate Ricciardi, says: "Believe that nothing in my memory is so vital and tenacious as my sense of your affection and of the devotion which I owe Lucrezia."—*Letters of Salvator Rosa.*

If Lucrezia proved herself unworthy of her chaste name, by yielding to the seductions of one of the most seducing men of the age, it is some extenuation of her fault, that she was not "won, unwoo'd," nor was she ever faithless to him, who had rendered her untrue to herself; for Salvator styles her "*La mia donna crudel*,"* and seems to have always treated her as

* A sonnet said to be addressed to Lorenzo Lippi by Salvator Rosa, on his painting a portrait of the Signora Lucrezia, begins thus,

Lippi se bene hai nell' tue linee impressa
La mia Donna crudel, che viva e spira;
Onde dice ciascun, che la rimira
Questa e la Dea d'amore e viva è desta."

The descendants of Salvator Rosa, now residing in Rome, possess a portrait, which they assert to be that of Lucrezia. "It is" (says a gentleman who has lately seen it) "in a woeful condition, far from interesting, and not to be ascribed to Salvator, as the head is covered by a *black hood*—a head-dress not in fashion in the time of Lucrezia, as all the portraits of that age prove. The picture is most probably not hers.

the wife of a left-handed marriage:—a sort of union which still exists on the continent, and of which royalty avails itself, when state-policy is at variance with the policy of the heart. Her name is rarely omitted in his letters, and always respectfully mentioned; and she accompanied him in all his visits, not only to the villas of his friends the illustrious Maffei, but to the houses of the most respectable ecclesiastics.

The conduct of Salvator in this instance, even with reference to the age and country in which he lived, was sufficiently indefensible (as violating the best interests and institutions of society) to satisfy the malice of his enemies, and to grieve the hearts of his friends. But his blameable frailty was exaggerated, by the calumny of party-spirit, into heartless and systematic profligacy; and the darkest error of his life*, which he sought to redeem by all

* Salvator and Lucrezia were married at Rome by the

the means of reparation in his power, was made the basis of misrepresentations equally foreign to his taste and character, and in direct contradiction to all that his contemporary biographers have left on record, both of his life and death. The party, however, which fell upon his reputation and his memory, with all the pertinacious acrimony of a modern English Vice-Society, had not one word of reproof to direct against the Royal Harems of Whitehall and Versailles; and still less for the *Prin-*

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reverend Father Francesco Baldovino (the intimate friend of Salvator), but too late to save the reputation of the fair Lucrezia, or to redeem the frailty of her lover. The *bon-mots* attributed to Salvator on this subject, even on his death-bed, were the fabrication of his enemies long after that event occurred, for the purpose of throwing an odium on his satires (which attacked so many interests and prejudices), by blasting the memory of their author. The account of his last moments by his spiritual attendant, Baldovino, and his own life and works, are the best refutation of calumnies which were first published forty-eight years after he had descended to the grave.

cipesse del Vaticano, as the favourite ladies of Innocent X. were openly denominated in Rome. They saw no scandal in the amatory confessions of Cardinal de Retz,* (who has set off his amusing memoirs by episodes of his own loves, and those of his brother cardinals), but keeping all their moral vituperation for the plebeian author of "*Regulus*" and the "*Babilonia,*" prudently judged,

> "That, in the Captain, but a choleric word,
> Which in the Soldier was foul blasphemy."

It is no small proof of the intensity of his devotion to Lucrezia, if not of its purity, that from the period of her becoming an inmate of his house, Salvator appears gradually to have withdrawn from that perpetual round of gay and dissipated society, into which his social talents had hitherto plunged him; and even

* "Le Cardinal de Retz," says Voltaire, "parle de ses amours avec autant de vérité, que de ceux du Cardinal de Richelieu."

the light and honourable bondage in which he was held by the Court of the Medici became so insupportable, that he took the resolution of throwing up his engagements, and retiring altogether from Florence. To soften down this self-dismission to the Grand Duke and his brothers, Salvator pleaded his having accepted an invitation from his dear friends the Counts Ugo and Giulio Maffei, who had long pressed him to pass an indefinite time in their palace in the antient Etruscan city of Volterra, and at their two beautiful villas in its neighbourhood, Monte Ruffoli and Barbajana, for the purpose of completing and compiling his literary productions. The Princes de' Medici, if they regretted, did not resent the voluntary retreat of Salvator; while he, having once snapt asunder the "*dorate catene della Corte*," "never," says Baldinucci*, "would again subject his

* "Non volle mai più soggettarsi la libertà dell' anima sua per provisioni di qual si fosse Potentate del mondo;

spirit to dependence for any pecuniary recompense which any potentate in the world could bestow on him; although he was solicited by some with the most pressing instances: and it was his only boast to have so managed, that he could now live to himself and for his own pursuits, without any intrusion from others, and liberated from the gilded chains of a court."

Salvator, in accepting the hospitable invitation of his illustrious friends, for himself and his family, was governed by the favourite *senza suggezione* of Italian enjoyment; and it was agreed that the taste, feeling, and caprice, of the eccentric guest of the Maffei, was alone to limit or extend the length of his visit.

The ancient city of Volterra, crowning a

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benchè con pressantissime istanze ne fosse solicitato; ed era l'unico vanto suo di essersi condotto di vivere a se stesso, e ai propri studi, senza alcuni di quelle noje d'altrui che sogliono recare le dorate catene della corte." —*Baldinucci.*

bold acclivity, stands at about twenty miles distance from Florence. Its mouldering walls, erected ere Rome was dreamed of, its Etruscan monuments and many domes and spires, reflected in the beautiful river Era, which flows at its base, and the dark woods, which, from the summit of the surrounding hills, spread their rich masses to the very verge of the laughing champaign vales, all contributed to render this paradise an appropriate residence for one who was a worshipper of Nature in all her aspects. Salvator had frequently fled to these fair Etruscan shades, from the gaieties of Florence, sometimes in moods of fitful melancholy, sometimes to study landscape under another view than that presented to him among the terrible sublimities of the Abruzzi. "And truly it was a site," says Baldinucci, "well worthy of his fine and picturesque genius. Rocks, mountains, torrents, masses of shade and vistas of brightness,—all that is most pictorial, and is scattered over the most distant regions,—na-

ture had here concentrated; and here Salvator may have indulged, even to surfeit, his philosophical humour, and nourished those profound speculations which he afterwards wove into poetical compositions." It was here that (according to Passeri also) he took the scenery of his great Bacchanalian piece, and of several of his landscapes for the Palace Pitti, "some of which," says a modern French writer, "have all the glow and softness of Claude Lorraine."

It was here too, on the very spot where Catiline fought and fell, (and

"Nothing in his life
Became him like his leaving it,")

that Salvator (himself no stranger to the dark councils of conspiracy) first drew in the elements, and conceived the idea, of the noblest of all his works—his "*Catiline Conspiracy.*"*

* It is a curious fact, that accident should have conducted *another* conspirator to the same spot, almost at the same time. For the author of *La Conspiration de Fiesque*, Cardinal de Retz, the principal instigator of the Fronde,

That longing after solitude which accompanied Salvator from the cradle to the tomb, and from which his talents and ambition had hitherto withdrawn him, was now gratified to its fullest bent. The *Maffei*, who passed the greater part of their winters at Florence, left him the undisputed master of his time and occupations, in their vast palace at Volterra, and in their villas in its neighbourbood. It was during this period that he gave himself up almost exclusively to deep study, and to the cultivation of his poetical talents. Here he first reduced to order, corrected, and transcribed, all his satires, (with the exception of

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being received in his flight to Rome by the Grand Duke de' Medici, observes; "Le Signor Annibal me mena dans une maison qui est sous Volterra, qui s'appelle l'Hospitalità, et qui est batie sur le champ où Catilina fut tué; elle était autrefois au grand Laurent de Medicis." *Memoires de Retz.*—Salvator must have been a resident at Volterra at the very time that his fugitive Eminence passed a few days at the *Hospitalità*.

his *L' Invidia,*) for the purpose of their publication; and here he first read them consecutively to the literary friends who from time to time came to visit him from Florence:—not, however, with all the charm of his musical recitation, as when he gave them *al improvviso* at Rome and at Florence; but with the sobriety and timidity of one about to avail himself of the judgment of the judicious few, before he ventured to appear before the tribunal of the mighty many.

The person from whose criticisms upon these occasions he made no appeal, was the celebrated experimentalist *Redi,* who, says a French writer, "*fit une révolution dans la medecine et sût si bien interroger la Nature.*" When Redi pointed out to Salvator, in the course of his readings, the frequent *Neapolitanisms,* or rather the *anti-Tuscanisms,* which disfigured his work, he instantly struck them out; and, at Redi's suggestion, he endeavoured to moderate the impetuous ardour with which he wrote,

and to give more method and unity to the bold and wild productions which flowed from his copious imagination with a Pythian vehemence. "I have myself," says Baldinucci, "a volume of his (Salvator's) by me now, in which he entered his verses without rule or order, and which bears testimony to the impatient manner in which he noted down the '*velocissime effusioni*' (most rapid effusions) of his intellect." Baldinucci observes, "that many of these fragments were in blank verse *(versi sciolti)*, and *were conceits which Rosa afterwards incorporated in his Satires.*"

Although the life of Salvator was now rather that of a man of letters than a painter, he was so far from abandoning his art, that he regularly devoted a few hours of every day to its pursuit; and he painted successively, for his illustrious hosts, his "*Sacrifice of Abel*," and his "*Queen Esther*," in which it is traditionally said, that the portrait of Lucrezia is preserved. He also painted, as a present

for Ugo Maffei, the fine portrait of himself (Salvator) which now hangs in the Royal Gallery at Florence; and which is remarkable as being (in all probability) the foundation-picture of that collection of the portraits of painters which owes its existence to Cardinal Leopold de' Medici. Ugo Maffei had given the portrait of Salvator to the Cardinal, who shortly after invited all the painters in Europe to send in their own portraits; and thus began one of the most interesting departments of the most interesting gallery in the world. It was occasionally the custom of Salvator, at this period, to leave even the retirement of the Maffei palace at Volterra, for the still deeper solitudes of the deserted villa of Barbajano; and it was upon these occasions that he was wont to relieve the fatigues of deep and pensive meditation, by sketching little historical subjects on the walls of the rooms, done as it were on scraps of paper, hung up by a nail or peg. Although these capricious trifles were only

composed in black and white, yet so powerful was their relief, and so finely managed their lights and shadows, that they appeared to the eye of the spectator to be dropping from the walls; and many a hand was stretched out to rescue fragments so precious from the accidents which apparently threatened their destruction.

The placid retirement and studious solitude of Salvator, though unreservedly indulged for a part of the year, were agreeably interrupted during the seasons of the Carnival and of the Villeggiatura, which the Maffei always spent in Volterra and their Etruscan villas. The carnival was there celebrated with its wonted gaieties and festivities. Comedies were acted at the Palazzo Maffei, and Salvator re-appeared on the scene in the new character of *Pattaca*, a shrewd varlet, who had become manager of a dramatic company.

The carnival over, and the villeggiatura begun, Salvator (previously stipulating for his dear independence, and for privacy during a

certain period of the day,) accompanied the circle which composed the elegant society of the Monte-Ruffoli. On these occasions he wholly laid aside his pencils, and, when not in society, devoted himself to literary pursuits. "The first hours of the morning," says one of his biographers, "were given to the chase; and the interval, between his return and dinner, was devoted to study and composition." It was, however, at the supper, which followed these dinners, at which the most distinguished literati of Florence assembled, that the hours fled on golden wings. It was there that Salvator's spirits took their brightest tone, and his morning studies never failed to afford him some pleasant text, producing an animated and prolonged discussion, more noted, it is said, for its "*mirabile giocondità*," than for its gravity or learning.

Thus at intervals enjoying the society of the elegant and the enlightened, retired from the cares and cabals of the world he always despised, secluded in scenes of beauty with one

he loved "not wisely, but too well," Salvator might be supposed to have united all the views, and gratified all the tastes, of the poet, philosopher, and lover. This does not, however, appear to have been the fact: Florence had been the exile's refuge—Volterra was his asylum; and both were connected with the unpleasant feelings which accompany a sense of banishment and of dependence. Besides, he was "*nel mezzo del cammin' dell' nostra vita*,"* in the noon of life's brief day, and he turned anxiously towards some resting-place, which he might call by the blessed name of home. He was also a father; for his eldest son Rosalvo was born about this time, and he must have felt in this increase of family, an impediment to his remaining a domesticated guest, even with his most intimate friend.†

* Dante.

† In one of his letters to Ricciardi after his arrival in Rome, he talks with triumph of being restored to his pristine liberty. "Posso dire d'essere restituito alla mia pristina libertà."

To a man of his intellect and generalized views, a provincial capital like Florence was but ill adapted for a permanent residence. The perpetual interference of the petty sovereigns of such petty states with their enslaved subjects, might in the end have proved a source of endless disquietude to one, who as an artist, either harassed by their patronage, or injured by their neglect, would have been held particularly subject to their dictation and their caprice. He had probably not forgotten the fate of *Benvenuto Cellini*, the unfortunate protegé of Cosmo de' Medici; and he was well aware, that, as a casual visitor, he enjoyed advantages in Florence, which, as a permanent resident, he could never hope to preserve. He had, besides, evidently got weary of that academic pedantry which prevailed in its literary circles; and having already consigned the Della Crusca and its "*Infarinati*" to eternal ridicule in stanzas which were now in every body's mouth, he had laid the foundation of future literary persecutions from an incorporated so-

ciety of learned blockheads, who were still flushed with the triumphs won by their ridiculous predecessors, over one of the greatest poets Italy had ever produced,—a poet, who, like Salvator, was a Neapolitan.

He resolved therefore on leaving Florence. There was but one city in Italy, which his habits and tastes led him to select for a permanent residence; and that city was Rome. Early associations, early friendships, early triumphs were all connected with that still great capital of the arts; and it is more than probable, that many of his Roman friends had paved the way for his return. The Ghigi family were all powerful. Some of his old opponents in the Conclave, who had fancied that they had found a place in "La Fortuna," were dead: and time and accident had done their usual work of devastation, and removed other impediments to his return. From the great masters then resident in Rome, he may have supposed that he had little to apprehend. Claude Lorraine was de-

clining into the vale of years, though not declining in vogue. Gaspar Poussin was prematurely wearing out by physical infirmities, brought on by his immoderate passion for field sports; and Nicolas Poussin was becoming old and infirm. Even Bernini, who had found, like other despots, that the abuse of power eventually turns against itself, had "fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf," and becoming, as one of his biographers styles it, "*the victim of a terrible conspiracy*," was reduced to inventing gewgaw carriages for the eccentric Queen Christina of Sweden, whose restless, wandering spirit had then led her to the Court of Rome. Pietro da Cortona and Carlo Maratti were indeed still in their prime; but *they* were friends whom Salvator was glad to meet, and rivals he had no cause to fear.

CHAPTER IX.

1652—1673.

Departure of Rosa celebrated by the Tuscan poets—He arrives in Rome, and establishes himself on the Monte Pincio—Scenery of the Pincio at that epoch—Salvator attacked by his professional rivals and political enemies—Refuses to paint for the public, and executes pictures for his own gallery—Again receives orders, and executes several great works—Paints for the Constable Colonna, for the King of Denmark, and for the Venetian Ambassador—Paints his great battle-piece as a present from the Court of Rome to Louis XIV.—His generosity—Birth of his son Agosto—His splendid position in Rome—His walks on the Monte Pincio—Fresh persecutions—Attack on his historical pictures—He refuses to paint small pictures and landscapes—Attacks on his poetical works—His unhappy state of mind—Accepts an invitation to attend the royal nuptials of Cosmo III. at Florence, for the purpose of changing the scene—Resides at the house of Paolo Minucci, and at

Strozzavolpe—Refuses an invitation from the Archduke Ferdinand—Refuses to paint during his visit to Florence—His engravings—His Filosofo Negro—Madonna Anna Gaetano—The Portrait—Return of Salvator to Rome—He makes a journey to Loretto—His enthusiasm for romantic scenery—His return to Rome—Resumes his professional and ordinary habits.

SALVATOR returned to Florence in order to bid farewell to the friends who had contributed to the happiness of those years he had enjoyed there; and his departure from that capital for Rome was marked by every public testimony of respect, and every private mark of regret, that could flatter his love of glory, or gratify his affections.*

Elegies, sonnets, and poetical adieus, ("*all collected by me*," says that arch-collector of all things, Baldinucci,) flowed in from all quarters.

* Baldinucci observes, that when Salvator left Florence for Rome, it was "*con sommo e generale dispiacere degli amici*," to the great regret of his friends, who could not, he declares, take leave of him without tears.

The names of the Duc di Salviatti, of the mathematician Torricelli, of Cardinal Bandinelli, and the Abate Ricciardi, are distinguished among the elegiac eulogists, who recorded in Tuscan verse the loss which the society of Florence sustained, by the departure of one of its most brilliant and accomplished members. The deep impressions of tenderness and regret which Salvator carried away with him from Florence, and his occasional visits during the remainder of his life to his friends Minucci, Ricciardi, and Maffei, prove, that if Rome was the object of his professional ambition, Tuscany, with the beauty of her scenes and the amenity of her inhabitants, was the rallying point of his most gracious recollections!

Although the assignments of the court had been most liberal, and his gains immense, he confessed in confidence, to Baldinucci and others, that he carried with him to Rome but a small sum of money. For the generosity with which he had assisted in their pecuniary

embarrassments, not only his friends, but upon several occasions his known enemies*, was as little favourable to accumulation, as his professed principles, which made him an open and avowed contemner of wealth, were inimical to every sordid consideration. Still, however, while preaching a stoical philosophy, and in some instances practising it, (by one of those contrarieties which chequer human character,

* "In questo però era sì poco fortunato, che si trovò bene spesso d'avere impegnato gli atti della propria beneficenza aprò de' persone che scordatesi del benefizio, occuparavano poi luogo de' maggior anzi fra i di lui più giurati nemici e persecutori, e furono quegli stessi che più di ogni altro preferò a biasimare le belle opere sue, tanto in pittura, che in poesia†."—*Baldinucci.*

† In this instance he was so little lucky, that he frequently found he had lavished his acts of beneficence upon persons, who, forgetful of his generosity, ranged themselves among his bitterest enemies and persecutors, and who, above all others, were ever ready to condemn his works, both pictorial and poetical.

and render the conduct of the wisest at best but

"*A tangled web of good and ill together,*")

Salvator was fond of splendid and ostentatious display. He courted admiration from whatever source she could be obtained, and even sought her by means to which the frivolous and the vain are supposed alone to resort. He is described therefore as now returning to that Rome from which he had made so perilous and furtive an escape, in a showy and pompous equipage, with "servants in rich liveries, armed with silver-hafted swords, and otherwise well accoutred." The beautiful Lucrezia as "*sua Governante*" accompanied him, and the little Rosalvo gave no scandal in a society where the institutions of religion substitute licence for legitimate indulgence, and prove that nature is never violated with impunity. Immediately on his arrival in Rome, Salvator fixed upon one of the loveliest of her hills. for his residence, and purchased an handsome

house upon the *Monte Pincio* *, on the *Piazza della Trinità del Monte;* "which," says Pascoli †, "he furnished with noble and rich furniture, establishing himself on the great scale and in a lordly manner." A site more favourable than the Pincio for a man of Salvator's taste and genius could scarcely be imagined, commanding within the scope of its vast prospect, views at once picturesque and splendid, monuments of the most important events in the history of man—the Capitol and Campus Martius! the groves of the Quirinal, and the Cupola of St. Peter's! the ruined palaces of the Cæsars, and the sumptuous villas of the sons of the reigning church! Such was then, as now, the range of unrivalled objects which the

* Passeri, who frequently visited at Rosa's house, says expressly, that Salvator lived in the *Piazza della Trinità, nella Piazza d'Espagna*, which must mean directly *over* the Piazza d'Espagna.

† "Di nobili e ricchi arnesi; e trattendosi alla grande, e da signore."—*Pascoli.*

Pincio commanded: but the noble terrace smoothed over its acclivities, which recalled the memory of Aurelian and the feats of Belisarius, presented at that period a far different aspect from that which it now offers. Every thing in this enchanting site was then fresh and splendid; the halls of the Villa Medici, which at present only echo to the steps of a few French students or English travellers, were then the bustling and splendid residence of the old intriguing Cardinal Carlo de' Medici, called the *Cardinal of Tuscany*, whose followers and faction were perpetually coming to and fro, mingling their showy uniforms and liveries with the sober vestments of the neighbouring monks of the Convent della Trinità! The delicious groves and gardens of the Villa Medici then covered more than two English miles*, and amidst

* The Villa Medici was erected in 1550, by Cardinal Ricci di Monte-Pulciano, and was purchased by the Cardinal Alexander Medici, afterwards Pope Leo XI. The

cypress shades and shrubberies, watered by clear springs and reflected in translucent fountains, stood exposed to public gaze all that now forms the most precious treasures of the Florentine gallery — the Niobe! the Wrestlers! the Apollino! the Vase! and, above all, the *Venus* of *Venuses!** which has derived its distinguishing appellation from these gardens, of

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Cardinals of Tuscany continued to reside in it until the year 1666, when it was purchased by the French government under Louis XIV., as an academy of the fine arts and a school for the young students of the French nation.

* When Evelyn visited Rome in 1644, three years before Salvator went to Naples to join Falcone's party, the Niobe group was still standing in the open air. "Here is also a low balustrade with white marble, covered over with natural shrubs, ivy, and other perennial greens, divers statues and heads being placed as in niches; at a little distance are those famed statues of Niobe and her family, in all fifteen," &c.—*Evelyn*, Vol. i. p. 97–8. What a neighbourhood for Salvator Rosa!

which she was long the boast and ornament. In emerging from the shady bowers and the pleasant terraces of the Villa Medici, the "*glorious fabrick*," the "*elysium of delight*," as Evelyn calls the *Villa Borghese*, burst upon the eye, and allured the steps to its blooming Paradise! Not then, as now, did the voluptuous dwelling of the Borghese exhibit its luxurious banqueting hall and magnificent porticoes! Neglect had not *then* faded the brilliant tints of its frescoed pavilions, suffered its pure fountains to mantle, or its living springs to dry! Its gardens were not then weedy wildernesses, nor its saloons silent as the tomb! In the pleasurable retreat of the powerful Cardinal Borghese of that day, every thing spoke the "pomp and circumstance" which the frankly voluptuous sons of the church gloried in displaying with rival splendour! There was nothing of that unsocial self-centred enjoyment, of that sly, sullen, and sober sensuality, which mark the private and indolent life of the prelates of a more modern sect, and add the vices of simulation and selfish-

ness to the sumptuous frailties of the demi-gods of the conclave. With them external magnificence was coupled with personal enjoyment. Their habits and tastes were still in some coincidence with the arts, and forwarded the developement of the national genius: and if their cooks and gardeners were inferior to those of their reformed brethren in our own days, their porticoes and galleries exhibit to posterity far nobler monuments of taste and liberality, than those which future generations may discover in the *snug eating parlours* of the old diocesan palaces of another but an equally wealthy hierarchy. The Monte Pincio, however, was inhabited in the middle of the seventeenth century by personages more remarkable than princes and prelates, and exhibited edifices which, though of smaller pretension, were not less interesting than its palaces and convents. The pictorial genius of Rome has, at various epochs, chosen the Pincio as its temporary or final residence; and the house selected by Salvator Rosa to live and die in, stood nearly

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opposite to that salient angle in the Piazza della Trinità, which is formed by the elegant mansion raised by Federigo Zucchero, and still enriched by his frescoes; and it was situated between the houses of N. Poussin and Claude Lorraine*—a proof of the good understanding which must have existed between these great masters, ere Salvator fixed upon so close a community for his permanent residence and last home.

In the arrangements of his new residence,

* The façades of all these houses have been, I am told, thrown down and rebuilt; and it would now be impossible to guess at their original dimensions. Such subjects have no interest for the modern Romans, of which the filthy and neglected state of the residence of Cola Rienzi (the most singular specimen extant of the domestic architecture of the middle ages) is a proof; and in this instance, as in every other relative to the subject of this work, I have found it impossible to obtain any information I could depend upon from those immediately on the spot.

Salvator displayed all his characteristic peculiarities; still sheltering his natural love of elegant splendour under his respect for the art. His gallery, decorated by some of his finest pictures, which he had brought from Florence, shone with rich gilding and curious carvings, conspicuous on the massive frames in which his precious works were enshrined*; vessels of solid silver (presents from his admirers) were carelessly displayed; and all the furniture of this little temple of the arts was of suitable splendour; while his own saloon, where he received his

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* Salvator, like the great masters of a preceding age, himself made the designs for the frames which enclosed his own works.

In disposing of his pictures, he always refused to sell the frames, which remained on the walls of his gallery. When accused by his friends of lavishing unnecessarily large sums of money on what was merely ornamental, he was wont with a smile to reply from Ariosto,

"*Molto cresce una belta, una bel manto.*"

friends in private intimacy, continued the tub of Diogenes, and retained all the frugal simplicity which distinguished the house of the young and indigent Rosa of the *Via Babbuina* in less prosperous times.

On the return of Salvator to Rome, and his immediate establishment on the Pincio, those that remained of his old friends rallied round him; but he soon found, that if time and death had thinned the ranks of his ancient enemies,

"*Les envieux meurent, mais non pas l'Envie.*"

Calumny met him at the gates of Rome, defamation was at "its dirty work again," and professional envy, sheltering itself under party feeling, attacked the principles and opinions of a man, whose genius and successes were the true causes of the persecutions he endured. According to Baldinucci and Passeri, it was in vain that "orders poured in upon him from divers parts of the world." He had still to

struggle at home against his most implacable enemies, ignorance and envy.*

To find in the spot which for the sake of early impressions and long-formed ties he had chosen as his last home, envy, hatred, and opposition, filled the susceptible bosom of Salvator with bitterness; and he gave himself up for a time to the most gloomy feelings. "He ran over in his mind," says Pascoli, "all the injustices he had from the beginning endured, all the wrongs that had from time to time been heaped on him, and had opened fresh wounds in his heart†; and he finally determined to take a signal vengeance. With this view he not only put a price upon his works excessive beyond all purchase, but he finally forbore selling them at all, contemning the offers he received,

* "Ai più implacabili nemici, cioè all' ignoranza ed all' invidia."—*Baldinucci.*

† "*Pungentissime colpe nel cuore,*" is Pascoli's strong expression.

and even treating with *hauteur* the individuals who made them; thus giving the last blow * to the hopes of those who still sought to enrich their collection by the works of the artist, while they abandoned the man to the persecutions of his enemies. He continued, however, to exhibit his noble productions at all public exhibitions, and then withdrew them to his own gallery, declaring that his pictures were now executed for himself alone.

Having thus frequently sharpened desire, by exciting admiration and then disappointing it, "he for a time," says Pascoli, "held the wishes of the public in suspense." His necessities, however, obliged him to abate something of what he himself terms "*his infernal pride.*" He again condescended to receive and to execute orders; but it appears that he did so at no vulgar behest, for he now worked chiefly for princes and prelates; and his pictures became

* "Per dar *maggior martello* alle lor brame."

diplomatic bribes between intriguing cabinets, or royal presents from king to king.

While Carlo Maratti was working with daily assiduity in the magnificent gallery of the most interesting palace in Rome (the Colonna), condescending to paint cupids and roses on fragile mirrors, (which, however, still decorate walls dismantled of nobler and more lasting ornaments,) Salvator was employed by the Constable Colonna in painting historical pictures for the same gallery, and even affected to barter compliments with the puissant prince. By more than *one* ill-timed but generous present to a man so greatly his superior in wealth and rank, he unconsciously laid the foundation of a calumny against his noted disinterestedness, which, inconsistent as it is, still stamps his liberal character with one solitary incident of ridicule, or of avarice. "The Constable Colonna," says a modern retailer of pictorial anecdotes, "sent a purse of gold to Salvator Rosa on receiving one of his beautiful

landscapes. The painter, not to be outdone in generosity, sent the prince another picture as a present, which the prince insisted on remunerating with another purse; another present and another purse followed; and this struggle between generosity and liberality continued to the tune of many other pictures and presents, until the prince, finding himself a loser by the contest, sent Salvator two purses, with the assurance that he gave in, "*et lui ceda le champ de bataille.*" The pictures painted at this time for the Constable Colonna were, "Mercury and the Peasant," "Moses found by Pharaoh's daughter," * the two sublime St. Johns, and the landscapes which gave rise to the calumnious anecdote above recited.

About this time he is also said to have painted his *Jonas preaching at Nineveh*, for

* The fate of these two pictures is thus detailed by a French writer: "Des Anglais les ont porté en 1800 dans leur patrie, où ils ont été estimés à 84,000 livres."

the King of Denmark, which was followed by two great pictures for the Venetian ambassador then at Rome. Shortly after, Monsignore Corsini, being chosen Nuncio from the Court of Rome to Louis XIV, "*and it having been duly considered what would be the most acceptable offering to lay at the King's feet, it was decided in favour of a work to be executed by Salvator Rosa.*" This distinction coming at a moment when this *Lion of the art* was stung to the quick by the host of venomous insects that had fastened on him, must have been most gracious: Salvator, indeed, in mentioning the subject to Ricciardi, expresses, with an almost childish *naïveté*, his sense of the flattering preference given him over all the painters of Rome, at a moment when the Poussins, Claude Lorraine, Maratti, and Pietro da Cortona, were in the summit of their reputation. Still, for one whose vanity has always been brought in evidence against him, he assigns with infinite modesty as one of the causes of this preference, that "he

worked with greater celerity than other artists, and that the prompt departure of the Nuncio left but forty days for the execution of the picture."

"Signor Corsini (he writes) having been chosen Nuncio to the Court of France, after some consideration as to the offering to be made to the King, it was last week resolved, that it should be a picture of mine; the subject, a great battle-piece, the exact size of my Bacchanals, which you are acquainted with; viz. fourteen palms in length and nine in breadth: and for the execution forty days only are allowed me. As Monsignor must leave Rome by the end of September, and he was aware that no other painter could have executed his commission in so short a time, especially as it must be painted during the hot month of August, he has shut his eyes to the two hundred doubloons which is the lowest price I would accept. On my part, I most joyfully accept the commission, not only on account of the high price given, but for the high distinction (and it could not be higher) of

having a picture of mine selected by preference, as an offering from Rome to a King of France.*

While employed upon this immortal battle-piece, this poetry of carnage†, he observes to Ricciardi, that "his head was as full of slaughter and uproar, as though it were the head of Alecto herself." He seems indeed to have been

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* Letters of Salvator Rosa.

† This picture (with the Witch of Endor, by the same artist) is esteemed among the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Royal Museum of France in the present day. The following description, taken from Taillasson, will give some idea of its merit:—

"Sa grande bataille conservée au Muséum est surtout un ouvrage admirable, une poésie de carnage anime la scène, les ruines d'un palais, une vaste et aride plaine, des montagnes sauvages, le ciel, tous les objets de ce tableau ont un aspect funeste, et semblent n'avoir été faits que pour retentir des cris funèbres. La discorde et la rage y triomphent au milieu des maux quelles font, la soif dévorante du sang embrase tous les combattans, et jamais sur un théatre de carnage les blessures et la mort ne furent présentées plus terribles et plus affreuses."

wound up to his highest pitch of excitement by its success: he calls it his "*blessed picture*," and observes to his correspondent, "Should it succeed in France as it has done here, (and that I swear to you is as much as any modern picture ever did, not to speak of the old masters,) I shall be satisfied." All Rome crowded to his house to behold this splendid performance; and that the Spanish Nuncio offered him his own price at the same moment for two pictures to present to the very sovereign against whom Salvator had borne arms, was a curious incident at a time when the loyal academy of *San-Luca* still refused to admit him among its members, and when he found it impossible to procure the painting of a *sopra-porta* for any public edifice in Rome.

Proud as he appears to have been of the high prices which he now received, he seems to have set no further value on money*, than as it

* "Ce peintre (Salvator Rosa) extrêmement généreux, travailla plus pour la gloire que pour amasser des richesses."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres.*

enabled him to assist his friends in their pecuniary difficulties; and on learning the derangement of his dear friend Ricciardi's circumstances, occasioned by the extravagant conduct of a spendthrift brother, he placed all his recent earnings at his disposal, with an earnestness and cordiality which is not to be mistaken for mere profession. "I am here," he says, "to assist you, and I swear that so long as I am master of one giulio, one half of it shall be yours; so cheer up, and smile misfortune out of countenance. Remember that I am now richer than all the Crœsuses and Cæcilii* together; let that suffice, since I am yours truly and sincerely†."

It was in vain that the birth of a second son, (his favourite Agosto) and the advice of Ricciardi

* Cæcilius Claudius Isodorus left in his will to his heirs, 4116 slaves, 3600 yokes of oxen, 257,000 small cattle, and 600,000 greater sesterces of silver.—*Plin.* 33. cap. x.

† Letters of Salvator Rosa.

himself, urged Salvator to put some bounds to his generosity and liberal habits of life. He promised fairly, but did not as fairly perform. "At this time," says Pascoli*, "he figured away as the great painter, opening his house to all his friends, who came from all parts to visit him, and among others to Antonio Abbati, who had resided for many years in Germany. This old acquaintance of the poor Salvatoriello of the *Chiesa della Morte* at Viterbo, was not a little amazed to find his patient and humble auditor of former times, one of the most distinguished geniuses and hospitable Amphitryons of the day; and Pascoli gives a curious picture of the prevailing pedantry of the times, by describing a discourse of Antonio Abbati's at Salvator's dinner-table, on the superior merits of the ancient painters over the moderns, in which he "bestowed all the tediousness" of his erudition on the com-

* "Representava egli allora la figura vivamente di gran pittore."

pany. Salvator answered him in his own style, and having overturned all his arguments in favour of antiquity, with more learning than they had been supported, ended with an impromptu epigram in his usual way, which brought the laughers on his side.

" Signor Abbati mio, non parlo in gioco,
Questo che dato avete, è un gran giudizio,
Ma del giudizio n' avete poco." *

To all external appearances, the position of Salvator Rosa, both as a painter, a poet, and a distinguished member of the best society, was now eminently prosperous. Wherever he appeared, the finger of curiosity was pointed at him—a gracious circumstance in the life of the ambitious and the vain! From the moment that delicious spring of the Roman climate burst into its sudden bloom, till the

* I give the anecdote as it is related by Pascoli; but the *impromptu* epigram is a parody on his own lines in La Pittura, which he puts into the mouth of the hypercritic Biagio, on the subject of Michael Angelo's picture of the Last Judgment.

intolerable heats and fatal *mal-aria* of autumn emptied its public walks and thinned its *corso*, the appearance of Salvator Rosa and his followers on the Monte Pincio, to which he confined his evening walks, never failed to produce a general sensation, and to draw all the professed disciples of the "*far niente*" from the embowering shades of the gardens of the Villa Medici. The Monte Pincio was then, as now, the fashionable *passeggio*, or lounge, of Rome; but at a period when every nation, class, and profession still preserved its characteristic costume, the Roman mall exhibited many such fantastic groupings, as in modern times might furnish the genius of masquerade with models equally striking and picturesque.

Among the strolling parties of monks and friars, cardinals and prelates, Roman princesses and English peers, Spanish grandees and French cavaliers, which then crowded the *Pincio*, there appeared two groups, which may have recalled those of the Portico or

the Academy, and which never failed to interest and fix the attention of the beholders. The leader of one of these singular parties was the venerable Nicholas Poussin! The air of antiquity which breathed over all his works seemed to have infected even his person and his features; and his cold, sedate, and passionless countenance*, his measured pace and sober deportment, spoke that phlegmatic temperament and regulated feeling, which had led him to study monuments rather than men, and to declare that the result of all his experience was "to teach him to live well with all persons." Soberly clad, and sagely accompanied by some learned antiquarian or pious churchman, and by a few of his deferential disciples, he gave out his trite axioms in measured phrase and emphatic accent, lectured rather than conversed, and appeared like one of the peripatetic teachers of the last days of Athenian pedantry and pretension.

* "Si scorgeva più la severità che la placidezza."—*Vita di Nicola Poussino, Passeri.*

In striking contrast to these academic figures, which looked like their own "grandsires cut in alabaster," appeared, never-failingly, on the Pincio, after sunset,* a group of a different stamp and character, led on by one who, in his flashing eye, mobile brow, and rapid movement—all fire, feeling, and perception—was the very personification of genius itself. This group consisted of Salvator Rosa, gallantly if not splendidly habited, and a motley gathering of the learned and the witty, the gay and the grave, who surrounded him. He was constantly accompanied in these walks on the Pincio by the most eminent virtuosi, poets, musicians, and cavaliers in Rome, all anxious to draw him out on a variety of subjects, when air, exercise, the desire of pleasing, and the consciousness of success, had wound him up to his highest pitch of excitement; while many, who could not appreciate, and some who did not approve,

* Passeri, 432.

were still anxious to be seen in his train, merely that they might have to boast "*nos quoque.*"*

From the Pincio, Salvator Rosa was generally accompanied home by the most distinguished persons, both for talent and rank; and while the frugal and penurious Poussin was lighting out some reverend prelate or antiquarian with one sorry taper, Salvator†, the prodigal Salvator, was passing the evening in his elegant gallery, in the midst of princes‡, nobles, and

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* "E particolarmente verso la sera." *Passeri*:—who describes his followers as "Letterati, uomini di ingegno, e di bel talento, musici, e cantori della prima classe," p. 432. With respect to the professional musicians, Passeri seems to think that Salvator rather tolerated, than approved, of their society; for, he observes, "he knew what they *weighed*, and only *endured* them for purposes of his own."

† See Life of Poussin.

‡ "The society at his house was always numerous; consisting of cavaliers, prelates, princes, and I believe that some of the sacred college did not decline going there."—*Passeri*, p. 432.

men of wit and science, where he made new claims on their admiration, both as an artist and as an *improvvisatore;*—for till within a few years of his death he continued to recite his own poetry, and to sing his own compositions to the harpsichord or lute.

But neither the obsequiousness of the idle, the notice of the great, nor the devotion of his few well-tried friends, could soothe the irritable sensibility* of one, who was kept on the rack by those attacks upon his genius, his works, and his character, which he wanted the strength or vanity to despise, or the prudence to pass over in silent contempt.

Even the names of these calumniators, of

* While leading a life apparently so conformable to his vanity and ambition, in the midst of the great and the noble, he thus writes to Ricciardi :—" As you have excited my envy by your description of your residence at Carfagnana, enjoying that wood scenery so consonant to both our tastes, I swear to you that I have bid farewell to happiness since I have quitted Monte Rufioli."—*Letters of Salvator Rosa.*

whom Salvator and his biographers so bitterly complain, are now unknown; and they who so long possessed the power of torturing living genius, and darkening the mortal days of him whose works still keep his fame in the full freshness of popular admiration, have not themselves maintained even a parasite existence, nor preserved their own perishable reputations, embalmed in the sweet memory of the man they so unsparingly persecuted. But such is the fate of extraordinary talent, and such the price which is paid for that intellectual superiority, which arms against itself all the vanities and all the spleen of grovelling yet ambitious mediocrity!

Salvator was scarcely established in Rome, to enjoy the profitless but intoxicating admiration which his social talents always excited, when the cry was raised against his great historical pictures, and with such success, that for a time he received no orders for figure-pieces; while demands poured in for his *quadretti*,

those spirited and graceful little pictures, beyond his power as well as his will to execute. It was under such mortifying circumstances that his temper and equanimity wholly forsook him; and he could no longer restrain his bitter humour and vehement feelings, even in the presence of those whose rank commonly imposes restraint on ordinary characters and inferior classes. The Prince Francesco Ximenes having arrived in Rome, found time, in the midst of the honours paid to him, to visit Salvator Rosa, and being received by the artist in his gallery, he told him frankly, that he "had come for the purpose of seeing and purchasing some of those beautiful small landscapes, whose manner and subjects had delighted him in many foreign galleries." * "Be it known then to

* His own words are, "Sapiate ch' io non so fare paesi! So ben fare le figure, le quale io procuro che sieno vedute dagli studiosi delle arti, e da persone di alcuno giudizio

your Excellency," interrupted Rosa impetuously, "that *I know nothing* of landscape painting. Something indeed I *do* know of painting figures and historical subjects, which I strive to exhibit to such eminent judges as yourself, in order that *once for all* I may banish from the public mind that fantastic *humour* of supposing I am a landscape, and not an historical painter."

Shortly after, a very rich cardinal (*"ricchissimo porporato"*), whose name is not recorded, called on Salvator to purchase some pictures; and as his Eminence walked up and down the gallery, he always paused before some certain *quadretti*, and never before the historical subjects, while Salvator muttered from time to time between his clenched teeth, "*sempre, sempre, paesi piccole.*" When at last the Cardinal glanced his eye over

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come voi siete, per cavare una volta del capo alla gente questo fantastico umore ch' io sia pittore da paese, e non da figure."

some great historical picture, and carelessly asked the price as a sort of company question, Salvator bellowed forth, "*un milione.*" His Eminence, stunned or offended, hurried away, and returned no more.

It was at this period that Salvator painted his fine picture of "Job;" for he, like the great subject of his selection, was one "*bitter in soul.*" In this noble picture, the sufferer appears equally tormented by the remonstrances of friends, and the inflictions of his destiny. One in the garb of philosophy is evidently reasoning with him in vain, while a rude soldier gives him all the uncalculated sympathy of deep-felt commiseration, so much more soothing to misery than the counsel of the prudent or the precepts of the wise. This is one of Salvator's finest works. It is a reproduction of himself. It was purchased for, and long graced the Santa Croce gallery at Rome. It is at present in England.*

* A recent visitor at Fonthill Abbey observes of this

He now obstinately refused to paint any small pictures whatever; and was so maddened by perpetual opposition, ("*entrato in un smanio così inquiete*") that no sum that could be offered him (and the largest, says Passeri, were at his disposal) could induce him for a time to break through a resolution so sustained by his pride, yet so injurious to his interests.

While he was thus struggling against the arduous intrigues of professional rivalry in one art, he was attacked on the subject of another (as he himself expresses it) by "*the horrible infamies of his enemies*," with a species of insidious malignity against which there was no protection. Some accused him of usurping the fame of another, of whose posthumous works he had possessed himself; others denied his poetry all merit whatsoever. Some partisans

picture, while speaking of others in the collection, "The Job of Salvator Rosa, in my opinion, is worth them all together. This is very little more than a fine piece of *chiaro-oscuro;* but painted with such strong character and effect as to awe the beholder."

of the government, under colour of a mere curiosity to hear his satires, or a desire of replying to them, (according to the wrangling spirit of the day, which placed all literary subjects in dispute,) proved themselves the suborned spies upon his privacy; and in their attempts to draw down public odium in the place of his too influential popularity, so darkly misrepresented his life, manners, and recitations, that he was induced for a moment to defend himself in a court of justice. It appears, too, from his own correspondence, that one of the ablest lawyers in Rome was desirous to undertake his cause, from the *éclat* he was aware it would bestow on him.

"Imagine," (says Salvator upon this occasion, to his friend Ricciardi,) "Imagine the condition of your friend, 'of him who is all *spirit, life, and fire!*' Still, however, I ought to wear the mask of contempt and patience. I should remember that their fires are of straw, and mine of asbestos*."

* Letters of Salvator Rosa.

The continued irritation of Salvator's feelings at this epoch is best painted by his own words. In less than a month after the date of the above quoted letter, he observes to Ricciardi, "I have nothing of interest to communicate to you, if I do not tell you that peace is, I believe, for ever banished from my mind, in consequence of those same blessed satires, (which ere I had written, I wish I had broken my neck.) In fine, every thing now concurs to render me wretched, even in defiance of all the prudence and all the virtue in the world. Two of my enemies, however, have relaxed something of their persecutions, on hearing my last satire." *(L'Invidia.)* While he thus, in the secret confidence of friendship, exhibited all the weakness of an irritable sensibility and wounded self-love, in all external appearances he "*bated not a jot of hope and spirit*," but said publicly, that "instead of decrying his satires, the bells of Rome should ring out a peal to collect the people to come and listen to them:"

and he addressed a humorous expostulatory remonstrance to his literary censors, which, though not printed, is still said to be extant in manuscript.

It appears that his "Invidia," by its powerful strain of invective and intrinsic poetical merits, stunned for a moment the audacity of his enemies, and increased the number of his admirers; and the tremulously nervous Salvator, flushed by the consciousness of his triumphs, resumed much of his natural cheeriness, and high tension of mind and spirit. He now occasionally amused himself with his favourite histrionic pursuits, and struck out a new road to fame, which, had he never pursued any other, would have procured him the reputation of one of the first artists of his age. In November 1660, he thus writes to Ricciardi: "For some weeks back I have been amusing myself by etching in *aqua fortis:* in good time you shall see the results. It has not been my good fortune to produce these works (as I had hoped)

in the solitudes of Strozzavolpe,* but I have still reserved some subjects to execute there, when the *dove shall have found its resting place.*"† That event so long and so ardently desired by Salvator, the visit to Tuscany, and the repose of his fluttered spirits in the calms of its lovely scenery, at last arrived. The marriage of the heir apparent of Tuscany (afterwards Cosmo III.) with the beautiful and unfortunate Marguerite d'Orleans, was celebrated in 1661 in Florence, with a magnificence which the ostentatious Medici were always too happy to find occasions of exhibiting. Salvator Rosa was not only urged by his friends the Maffei, Ricciardi, and Minucci, to avail himself of this gay and festive event for visiting Florence, and relieving his harassed and overwrought mind by temporary recreations, but more than one of the Medici princes gave him a special invitation to partake of the royal and nuptial

* The villa of the Ricciardi family.

† See letters at the end of this Volume.

festivities. Salvator had the farther inducement of being accompanied in his journey by his intimate friend the *Abate Cesti*, the composer, who had been engaged by the Grand Duke Ferdinand to get up an opera for the court theatre, suitable to the occasion. A crowd of hospitable friends canvassed the pleasure of having Salvator and his family for their guests; for he came accompanied by Lucrezia and his little son Augustus, or as he calls him *Farfanicchio*. In Florence it appears that he took up his residence with his old friend Paolo Minucci, the commentator of the Malmantile; and in the country he enjoyed the eulogized shades of Strozzayolpe, the villa of the Ricciardi. It was on the occasion of this visit, that Salvator had the honour of knowing the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and his accomplished duchess, (a true Medici,) who had left their elegant little court of Inspruck, (the Weimar of that age,) to assist at the nuptials of their nephew.

The Archduchess, whose pride it was to

collect around her the most distinguished men of the day, who carried off Lorenzo Lippi to delight her literary circle with the recitation of his "Malmantile," and to decorate the walls of the gallery at Inspruck with his pictures, now, with a "vaulting ambition" that had higher quarry in view, commissioned Cesti to feel the pulse of Salvator Rosa relative to a visit to Inspruck. The bard, poet, painter, and actor, would have been a special prize for a *Grande Dame de par le monde*, and the terms offered to induce him to accept so gracious an invitation, repeated *de vive voix* both by the Archduke and Duchess, were enough to have tempted even the most disinterested, or to have flattered the most vain-glorious. But Salvator peremptorily, though respectfully, declined an honour which, with all its distinctions, was still in his eyes *dependence**; and so little did this royal invitation touch him, that, though his

* "Non volle impegnarsi più dopo che disempegnatosi fu dal Principe di Toscana al servizio di nessun altro;

letters on his return to Rome abound in allusions to his "*divine Strozzavolpe,*" he never once hints at the honours which awaited him in the gilded saloons of the Imperial Court of Inspruck*. It appears that at the very moment he declined becoming a member of a royal coterie, his proneness to study nature led him

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tutto che più volte ne fosse stato da diverse persone richiesto, e spezialemente del A. D. Ferdinando. Soleva perciò dire, che stimava più la sua libertà, che tutti gli onori e tutto l'oro del mondo, perche non ha prezzo." *Pascoli.*—"When once liberated from the service of the Arch-duke, he never would engage himself again, though often invited by many persons of distinction, especially the Arch-duke Ferdinand. He was wont to say, that he valued his liberty above all the honours and riches in the world, as being beyond all price."

* "Il aimait tant sa liberté," (says a writer the least favourable to Salvator, in speaking of this invitation,) "qu'il refusa d'entrer au service d'aucun Prince; quoiqu'on l'en eut souvent pressé, entr'autres Don Ferdinand d'Autriche quand il vint à Florence pour les noces du Grand Duc avec Marguerite d'Orleans."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres, &c.*

frequently to associate with one of the humblest of her children, and this philosophical disposition became the cause of an influential event on his future life. There dwelt in the service of Paolo Minucci, a domestic holding a place between that of a house-steward and a *chef-de-cuisine*, for he equally regulated the accounts, and superintended the cookery of the learned and reverend commentator's establishment. "He was," says Baldinucci, "a fellow of a coarse humour *(di grossa pasta e rozzo legname,")* mingling with a sort of half-witted buffoonery much native shrewdness and sagacity. Allowed to say whatever he pleased, and always pleasing to say something worth hearing, he appears to have been the very type of those *misnamed* fools, who were frequently the only wise persons in the courts and great houses in which they were retained for the amusement of the masters.

Salvator Rosa, struck by the humour of this kitchen Democritus, on whom he had bestowed the name of "*Il Filosofo Negro*," "the

grimy Philosopher," was wont occasionally to hold with him "*a keen encounter of the wits.*" It happened one day that, as he sat carelessly on the edge of a marble table chatting with this *Filosofo Negro*, who stood before him, the conversation took a turn which enabled the cook to mutter many sly attacks upon the notorious extravagance, in pecuniary matters, of the prodigal painter. Salvator in vain endeavoured to parry the blow, by a defence of his contempt of wealth on philosophical principles, and laughingly concluded his argument by observing, "One thing is certain, *Il mio Filosofo Negro*, that in the hour I have fooled away with you I might have earned an hundred scùdi."

"*Da vero!*" exclaimed the cook, opening his eyes, "*Eh ben, Signor padrone mio, siete dunque un gran goffo!*—In truth! Then verily, master o' mine, thou art an arrant blockhead for thy pains!" Then throwing himself into an oratorical posture, he continued, "Now what is all this talk about philosophy, and inde-

pendence, and the like, come to? Suppose your philosophership lost your voice by a cold, your hand by an accident, or your leg by a fall, *Signor Dio!* what then becomes of this same philosophy? where then would be *our* famous Signor Rosa! Signor Rosa the Improvvisatore! Signor Rosa the marvellous painter! Signor Rosa the poet and actor!! No, marry, it would *then* be Signor Rosa the cripple, Signor Rosa the pauper, Signor Rosa the mendicant. *Santa Madre!* I see him now standing at the porch of one of our holy churches, with his staff and his poor-box (bossolo) stunning the good devotees as they pass, with '*Carità, Signori Cristian miei!*' Philosophy, in sooth! I never yet could see the beauty of *that* philosophy which leads to the *staff and the poor-box.*"

The cook, having thus rounded his period, wiped his greasy face and went about his business. But when Minucci returned to his house after some hours' absence, he found

Salvator, with crossed arms and dangling legs, seated pensively on the marble slab where he had left him on going abroad. Minucci, accustomed to his fitful abstractions, sat down beside him, and accidentally turned the conversation to the arts, and the general extravagance of artists, whose money went more lightly than it came. Salvator agreed with him, and declared emphatically his own intention of beginning the most rigorous reform in his expenditure, until, growing warm as he spoke, he concluded by sketching a plan of life for his future conduct, which was that of the most penurious miser, "in order," he said, "that he *might provide against the accidents of age, infirmity, and the world's neglect.*" Minucci, struck by the suddenness of this extraordinary change, and the vehemence with which it was announced, began to argue on the danger and folly of extremes in all things; when Salvator, impatiently springing from the table, exclaimed, "What! do you then desire to see me reduced to beggary? and to behold me standing at a

church porch with a staff and a box, and *Carità, Signori Cristiani miei?*" Minucci thought he was mad; but on inquiry he discovered that his half-witted cook had done more by *an image* than all the learned and sage friends of Salvator had been able to effect by reiterated counsels of economical reform. The *graphic* reasoning of the grimy philosopher had its effect to a certain degree, and Salvator now first began to accumulate and economize; yet he was so far from acting up to the standard of reformation he had at first proposed, that when Ricciardi and Lippi both chided him some time after for some new act of unwarrantable generosity, he petulantly replied to their remonstrances, "*Voi volete dunque farmi avido di denaro, ed io vi dico, che fo, e faro tutto quello ch' io posso per distruggere in me medesimo ogni primiero moto di desiderio ch' io posso che me ne venga.*"—"You wish me then to become sordidly fond of money; but I must take leave to tell you that I, on the contrary, shall do every thing in my power to eradicate whatever

tendency I may have, or that may arise in me, towards that habit."

During this much-enjoyed visit to Florence, no profit or persuasion could induce him to apply himself to his profession: in answer to all requests, he replied, "he had come to enjoy, and not to work;" and though he accepted orders from the Martelli family, the young Prince Cosmo (afterwards Grand Duke), and others, for pictures to be painted on his return to Rome, he would enter into no engagement which could disturb the calm, or interrupt the recreations, of the passing moment.

But absolute idleness was impossible to his active and restless nature, and fertile and brilliant imagination; and while conversing in the literary circles of Florence, or lounging in the delicious shades of Strozzavolpe, he was always seen busily occupied with his graver, sketching or scratching on copper some of those spirited and graceful engravings in aqua-fortis, which are now deemed no less powerful proofs of his genius,

than his beautiful landscapes or noble figure-pieces.* "Perceiving that all he did, succeeded, he continued to occupy himself with this new

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* One of these etchings, which now lies before me, is curious as being a sort of allegorical portrait, or moral delineation, of Salvator himself. It is known to collectors by the name of the "*Genius of Salvator Rosa.*" The scene represents a wooded spot, with a fragment of fine architectural ruin, shaded by cypress trees, before which stands the dignified figure of a philosopher habited in the Roman toga, and holding in his hand the old Roman balance. Near him stands a satyr, with an arch and demoniac look, holding a roll of paper in his hand, which he points to the balance. At the feet of both, reclines a figure, who carelessly rejects the treasures which wealth pours before it from out her cornucopia, while a dead dove lies on its bosom, and its eyes are turned on a fine representation of liberty, who presents her cap. Painting appears in the back-ground, leaning on an entablature sketched with a human form; underneath, Salvator has engraved the following distich:

Ingenuus, liber, Pictor, succensor et æquus,
Spretor opum, mortisque, hic meus est genius.

pursuit, and now produced several fine etchings, some on flying sheets *(fogli volanti)*, and of a large size, others he did not finish till his return to Rome." "It were unnecessary," adds Passeri, " to describe the conceits and fancies which he executed on paper, because they are now all in general circulation, and every one may judge for himself; but I must needs say, that in these, as in all his other works, he exhibited the lustre of his fine genius, the hardihood of his spirited conceptions, and the decision of his bold hand, displaying great originality in his ideas, great wildness in his figures and their draperies, and a free and resolute touch in the leafing of his trees, so that altogether these works are well worthy the admiration of the best judges."

While Salvator continued to refuse all applications for his pictures, he was accidentally taken in to paint what he so rarely condescended to do—*a portrait.*

There lived in Florence, a good old dame of

the name of Anna Gaetano, who, though of some celebrity, held no more notable a rank than that of keeping an *osteria* or inn, over the door of which were inscribed in large letters, "*Al buono vino non bisogna fruscia*," "good wine needs no bush," (or literally, good wine wants *no rubbing up* or puffing); but it was not the racy Orvietto alone of Madonna Anna that drew to her house some of the most distinguished men of Florence, and made it particularly the resort of the Cavalieri Oltramontani:—her humour was as racy as her wine; and many of the men of *wit and pleasure upon town* were in the habit of lounging in the *Sala Commune* of Dame Gaetano, merely for the pleasure of drawing her out. Among these were Lorenzo Lippi and Salvator Rosa; and though this Tuscan Dame Quickly was in her seventieth year, hideously ugly, and grotesquely dressed, she was yet so far from deeming herself an "antidote to the tender passion," that she distinguished Salvator Rosa by a pre-

ference which deemed itself not altogether hopeless of return. While emboldened by his familiarity and condescension, she had the vanity to solicit him to paint her picture, "that she might," she said, "reach posterity by the hand of the greatest master of the age." Salvator at first received her proposition as a jest, for he rarely condescended to paint portraits, except his *caricato* sketches may be called such; but, perpetually teased by her reiterated importunities, and provoked by her pertinacity, he at last exclaimed—

"Orsù, Madonna, io ho deliberato da servirvi in quanto desiderate di me; con questo patto, per non distrarre la mia mente del lavoro, voi state quì, a sedere senza punto muovere da luogo, fin tanto ch' io abbia finita l' opera mia, e se voi lascierete di ciò fare, lasciero io di dipingere.

"Well, Madonna, I have resolved to comply with your desire; but with this agreement, that, not to distract my mind during my work,

I desire you will not move from your seat until I have finished the picture."

Madonna, willing to submit to any penalty in order to obtain an honour which was to immortalize her sexagenary charms, joyfully agreed to the proposition; and Salvator sending for an easel and painting materials, drew her as she sat before him, to the life. The portrait was dashed off with the usual rapidity and spirit of the master, and was a *chef-d'œuvre*. But, when at last the vain and impatient hostess was permitted to look upon it, she perceived that to one of the strongest and most inveterate likenesses that ever was taken, the painter had added a long beard; and that "mine hostess *al buon vino*" figured on the canvass as an ancient male pilgrim—a character admirably suited to her furrowed face, weatherbeaten complexion, strong lineaments, and grey hairs. Her mortified vanity vented itself in the most violent abuse of the ungallant painter, of whom her sex had ordinarily so little to complain;

and she is described as dealing out *her Tuscan Billingsgate,* with a purity that would have excited the envy of the most consummate Trecentisto of the Della Cruscan school. Salvator, probably less annoyed by her animosity than disgusted by her preference, called upon some of her guests (ultramontane painters and others) to judge between them. The artists saw only the merits of the fine painting, the laughers only looked to the jest; and the value affixed to the exquisite portrait, soon reconciled the vanity of the original, through her interests. After the death of Madonna Anna, her portrait was sold by her heirs at an enormous price, and is said to be still in existence.

The reluctance with which Salvator terminated his visit to Florence, and to the beautiful solitudes of Strozzavolpe, may be drawn from the evidence of his letters. From the month of November 1662, to a short time before his death, they are all records of his feelings and

his regrets, on this ever deeply interesting event. "It is wholly superfluous," he observes to Ricciardi, "to remind me of my last year's residence at Strozzavolpe; there passes not a day of my life in which my heart fails to celebrate in solemn commemoration, even the most trifling incident that occurred there; and that, too, not without considerable anguish, arising from the contrast of this epoch with my present position. The minutest particulars are recalled only to torment me; and I am perpetually chiding Agosto, who, by the by, remembers every thing, and who constantly embitters memory by reviving its impressions: this happens to be the case more particularly in this precise month, which was last year so pregnant with enjoyment."

In April 1662, and not long after his return to Rome, his love of wild and mountainous scenery, and perhaps his wandering tendencies revived by his recent journey, induced him to visit Loretto, or at least to make that

holy city the shrine of a pilgrimage, which it appears was one rather of taste than of devotion.

His reference to this journey is curious, as being illustrative of those high imaginations, and lofty and lonely feelings, in which lay all the secret of his peculiar genius: while his pantings after solitude, his vain repinings, exhibit the struggles of a mind divided between a natural love of repose, and a factitious ambition for the world's notice, and the *éclat* of fame—no unusual contrast in those who, being highly gifted and highly organized, are placed by nature above their species in all the splendid endowments of intellect; and who are, by the same nature, again drawn down to its level through their social and sympathetic affections.

In taking the route from Rome to Loretto, which is tracked through the wildest and steepest branch of the Apennines, in exploring

the stupendous elevations of the Col-fiorito, in wandering among the sterile deserts of Seravalle, the rocks and precipices of Valcimara *, the imagination of Salvator seems to have found its own region; and he observes to Ricciardi, "Your Verucolo, which I once thought such a dreary desert, I shall now look upon as a fair garden, comparing it with the scenes I have visited in these Alpine solitudes! Oh

* In the splendid collection of pictures at Rusborough (County of Wicklow) the seat of the Earl of Miltown, are two fine landscapes by Salvator Rosa, one of which is stamped with all the characteristic features of the scenery of Seravalle, and may have been executed after his return from Loretto. This princely edifice, and Lyons the seat of Lord Cloncurry, are perhaps the mansions in Ireland which exhibit in the highest degree that taste for the fine arts, and that liberality of spirit, which is so much wanting in a country, from whence all that is civilizing and refined has been long banished by faction and misrule.

God! how often have I sighed to possess—how often since called to mind, those solitary hermitages which I passed on the road—how often wished that fortune had reserved for me such a destiny*!"

On returning to Rome from a tour so prolific in enjoyment, he, however did not the less resume his ordinary habits of life, but opened his house as usual to the learned and the great; and applied himself with invigorated spirit to his professional duties, (for which his long leisure seemed to have given him a new zest), and to his literary pursuits, which he always cultivated with zeal. "In both," says Passeri, "he now acquired immortal fame; honoured by princes, and eulogized by the first literati, who came in crowds to visit him, and to enjoy his gracious conversation; and he who would

* Letters of S. Rosa.

relate all the subtilties of his arguments, the promptitude of his repartees, and the witty gallantries, which he daily uttered in the circle of his intimate friends, would fill *a thick volume.*"

CHAPTER X.

Salvator executes three great pictures for the exhibition of *San Giovanni*, on his return to Rome in the year 1663 —He exhibits his Catiline Conspiracy in the Pantheon —Its composition, and success — His depression of spirits and disgust with his art—Exhibition in the Pantheon 1664—His Saul and the Witch of Endor—Continued persecutions of his enemies—Obtains the distinction of painting an altar-piece at Rome, his first and last—Its subject—Anecdotes—His projects for the *Porta Flaminia*—Friendship of Carlo Rossi — His chapel in the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Santo Monte— Decline of Salvator's health and spirits—His letter to Ricciardi on the subject—Undertakes a series of caricatures at the request of his friends—Is unable to finish them—His decline—Opinion of his physicians— Is given over—His singular conduct—The last day of his life—His funeral in the *Chiesa di Santa Maria degli Angioli alle Terme*—His tomb and epitaph.

WHILE Salvator sighed, or fancied he sighed, for an hermitage among the savage cliffs of

Seravalle, his insatiable ambition for glory, and his want of those strong excitements which increase of fame ever brings with it, when "*appetite still grows with what it feeds on,*" urged him to fresh exertions in his art, and again exposed him to fresh attacks from the envy and intrigues of professional rivalry.

In the spring of 1662 he exhibited three fine pictures in the Pantheon, on the feast of Saint John, whose subjects were (as he observes to Ricciardi) "fresh and untouched."

The first was "Pythagoras on the Sea-shore," paying some fishermen for the permission to emancipate the fish they had just caught; "a fact," observes Salvator, "which I have taken from Plutarch."

The second represented the same philosopher issuing from a subterranean cavern to his disciples of both sexes, and relating to them his visit to the infernal regions, and his interview with Hesiod.

The third was "Jeremiah thrown into a

pit" by the Princes of Judea, for having prophesied the downfall of Jerusalem.

These pictures met with that success from the public which, at this time, attended all his works; and they were attacked by professional and party criticism with that virulence which was levelled at every thing produced by the author of "La Fortuna" and "La Babilonia." To the critical jargon of his enemies he replied by one of the most splendid of his productions, his bold, spirited, and magnificent "Jason;" and the paltry animadversions of peevish and jealous mediocrity were for a time silenced. It was reserved, however, for the exhibition of the year 1663, to be distinguished by the exposition of the master-work of his life and genius,—the work which he himself has stamped with superiority over all his other pictures, by giving it the title of "*mio quadro grande!*"—"my great picture!"

This great picture was his "Catiline Conspiracy." His own modest and simple account

of it, given in an hurried manner to his friend Ricciardi, is as follows:—

"I have exhibited at the *Festa di San Giovanni Decollato*, this year, my great picture! It consists of a group literally taken from the text of Sallust's history of the Catiline Conspiracy. It has had the most extraordinary success with all the true judges; I tell you this, because we ought to share our triumphs with a friend, and, above all, such a friend as you have ever been to me*."

The scene of this noble picture is an apartment in Catiline's palace. The light, which falls from above, is reflected from the marble walls, and most skilfully illuminates the heads of the splendid group in the foreground; leaving the lower part of the picture in deep and effective shadow. A beautiful antique tripod occupies the centre, and serves as an altar for the celebration of a fearful ceremony.

* Letters of S. Rosa.

The moment taken by the painter in the story of Catiline, is that so terrible and imposing, when, having detailed, with all the magic eloquence for which he was so noted, his views, and the nature of his perilous enterprise, he induces the conspirators to bind themselves to secrecy, and to the cause, by a solemn oath, consecrated by the awful ceremony of pledging each other in wine mingled with human blood*. The ceremony is just begun. Two persons in the dress of the Roman nobility stand forward, each with an arm outstretched and hands clasped over the tripod, while blood drops from

* "There were many people," says Sallust, "in that time, who said that Catiline, after he had made his speech and come to the administration of an oath to the conspirators, carried round a cup of human blood mingled with wine." Salvator Rosa has taken a much nobler view of this subject, and made a finer use of the terrible incident than Ben Jonson, who makes Catiline order a slave to be killed for the purpose. The conspirators of the great English dramatist are all vulgar ruffians.

the arm of one into a beautiful cup, or vase, held beneath.

In the countenance of him who bleeds, and whose blood is about to be quaffed, may be read one lettered and marked out for dupery—one expressly chosen from the band for this fearful act, that its awfulness might, by impressing his imagination with terror, bind him to that faith and secrecy he had not the strength or honour to preserve without such a sanction. Though of high birth, he was one stained with crime and obloquy, at once vain and audacious: incapable of keeping the secrets of others, or of hiding his own follies. This feeble villain is evidently Quintus Curius, who is thus described by Sallust, and thus painted in every trait and lineament by Salvator Rosa! the treachery which proceeds from weakness, is already traceable in the timid indecision of his looks!

In the well-defined features of him who clasps the hand of Curius, lurks more honesty, but not more firmness of purpose. He appears

overpowered rather than convinced; but he takes the oath, and seems equally divided in his attention by the awful act in which he is engaged, and by the stunning eloquence of that splendid apparition which hovers like an evil genius near him, and which though seen but in profile, with upraised arm and pointed finger, exhibits an almost unearthly superiority over all who surround it! This figure is Catiline—

> "Whose countenance is a civil war itself,
> And all his host have standing in his looks." *

He is evidently winding up the courage of his dupes to its sticking-place, both by look, and word, and gesture—while a Roman patrician, with a keen concentrated glance, as he holds the cup under the bleeding arm, reads the effects of the chief's eloquence, in the looks of Curius. Filling up the back-ground to the left of the picture, are two of the old guard of Sylla, in full armour. Long broken into civil

* "Catiline" by Ben Jonson.

dissensions, and ready in the weariness of slothful peace for any active mischief, they are gazing on the scene before them with looks of admiration and vulgar wonder, wondrously expressed. It is remarkable that over the stern features and martial figures of these veterans the painter has shed an air of plebeian grossness, which singularly and artfully contrasts with the high blood and dignified elegance of the patrician conspirators; some of whom fill up the background to the right. One, however, there is among them not confounded in their group, who comes prominently forward, as turning in disgust or horror from the atrocious ceremony of sealing an oath by a libation of human blood! one too, to whom the shedding of human blood was yet familiar, and who probably envious even then of the influence of Catiline, was already meditating that greater and far more fatal conspiracy against the liberties of Rome, which placed the world's diadem at his own feet. It is Julius Cæsar!—Such is the cold out-

line of a picture, which forms a page in history, and is never to be looked on but with powerful emotion!*

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* A fine engraving of the picture, which is here so inadequately described, lies before me as I write. It is by the Baron Denon, from whom I have just received it; and who, in a letter which accompanied the welcome present, observes on the Catiline of Salvator Rosa. "Dans ce tableau l'expression de l'inquietude, de l'agitation, du trouble est telle, qu'elle fait passer *toutes les sensations dans l'âme du spectateur!* Quelqu'un dont j'ai oublié le nom, a dit spirituellement en le regardant, 'que Rome ne pouvait jamais être en sureté, tant qu'un de ces hommes là existerait.'" The following account of this splendid picture is taken from one of the learned commentators of Passeri's "Lives of the Painters." "Famosissimo è il quadro della Congiura di Catilina, posseduto in Firenze dalla nobilissima casa Martelli, dove le figure sono al naturale, ma sono mezze, cioè dalla cintura in sù; Di esso in una lettera, stampata del dotissimo Signore Conti Magalotti, ce ne è una mirabile descrizione, come è mirabile il quadro, perche, datagli un occhiata alla sfuggita, si vede che quelli sono scellerati chi ordiscono

The "Catiline Conspiracy," in its conception, execution, and success, gave a new spring to the genius, and brighter *éclat* to the fame, of Salvator Rosa! But the political state of Europe at that particular epoch, and the sanguinary war into which it was plunged during the years 1664-65, had a considerable and very injurious influence on the arts. The difficulty of conveying pictures from Rome to other continental states, when every road was a military pass, shut up the market, and for a time left the first masters in Italy unemployed.

"For my part," says Salvator Rosa, "I may go and plant my pencil in my garden;" but he added, in his usual philosophic tone, "*all wealth lies in the mind.*" This mine, how-

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qualque congiura o altro capital misfatto; e volendo che chi si sia indovinasse la testa di Catilina, tutti daranno nella medesima, e diranno che non puo esser altra che quella che accennano, benchè tutte siano atroci, e d'assassino; inoltre il luogo e le tinte usate quì dal Rosa, sono proprie per un congiura di terribile importanza."

ever, did not satisfy him, for he observes to Ricciardi, that "though there was not even a dog to bespeak a picture, in such times, yet his engravings and etchings enabled him to keep his purse from running dry"—upon which, it appears, his style of living made no small demands.

It is obvious, however, from his letters, that the suspension of his pictorial labours, at particular intervals, did not wholly proceed from the want of orders, or decline of public favour.

His fine but fatal organization, which rendered him so susceptible of impressions, whether of good or evil, and which left him at times no shelter against "horrible imaginings," or against those real inflictions, calumny and slander, plunged him too frequently into fits of listless melancholy, when, disabused of all illusion, he saw the species to which he belonged in all the nakedness of its inherent infirmity.

"How I hate the sight of every spot that

is inhabited," he observes to Ricciardi, in allusion to his cravings after that solitude which his condition in life prevented him from enjoying. It was, indeed, under the influence of these morbid moods of constitutional sadness, that his genius, in losing the object of its exertions, lost its powers also; and he confesses in his letter dated 1664, "that the fatigue and lassitude of painting had become so great, that, to avoid falling into an utter disgust with his art, he was resolved to choose only the most facile subjects." And yet this was written one year after he had painted his Catiline, and nearly four years previous to the execution of a work that rivalled, if it could not surpass, that *chef-d'œuvre* of his pencil—his "*Saul and the Witch of Endor.*" The excitement which was necessary to lash him up to this high exertion, was afforded him by the following incident.

The usual annual exhibition of the feast of San Giovanni Decollato was got up in the year 1668, with a splendor hitherto unsurpassed,

and in a manner that excited the profoundest mortification among the Roman painters of all classes.

The nephews and brother of the recently elected and reigning pope, Clement X. (Rospigliosi), in all the intoxication of those "new honours" which "cleave not to their use but with the aid of time," meddled and interposed, even with institutions and establishments the least within the sphere of their proper influence and dictation. They chose to extend their interference, if not their patronage, to the arts, and to enroll themselves as members of the *Compagnia della festa di San Giovanni Decollato!* From this illustrious fraternity the humbler members boded no good; and Salvator, in a letter to Ricciardi, thus alludes to the circumstance, and to its probable results. "The brother of a Pope, with his four sons, have chosen to enter as novices into the company of the *festa di San Giovanni;* and to extinguish all hopes of success in the hearts of those who

may hereafter choose to enter the lists, they have actually despoiled the walls of the galleries of Rome of their most superb pictures, and, above all, the celebrated collection of the Queen of Sweden, (to exhibit on the occasion of the *festa*,) which collection alone might intimidate the Devil himself! The motive of their lordships acting in this manner is simply to exclude from the exhibition the works of all the living painters of the age; and this intention on their parts was sufficient to determine me, on mine, to enter the lists, which, with infinite difficulty, I have accomplished; and I alone, of all the living artists, have been permitted to compete with the mighty dead. I swear to you that I never felt so wound up to any enterprise before; but as so fine an opportunity of distinction may never again occur, I lay aside every consideration to start for the all which fame may yet have in reserve for me."*

* Letters of S. Rosa.

When this high honour was accorded to Salvator, probably more under the influence of public opinion, than from any partiality to the author of the Satires, Claude Lorraine and the Poussins were still living, and in Rome; and Carlo Maratti, and Pietro da Cortona, were each at the head of their crowded and fashionable schools. The distinction, therefore, accorded to Salvator Rosa, bears out Lanzi in his observation that Salvator Rosa was the painter most in fashion from the close of the seventeenth to the early part of the eighteenth century. The two pictures which he exhibited on this trying occasion, and which stood competition with the works of Da Vinci and Raphael, of the Caracci and Domenichino, were his "*Triumph of Saint George over the Dragon*," and his "*Saul and the Witch of Endor*." Three eminent geniuses

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* "Su i principi di questo secolo il Rosa era il più acclamato."—*Storia Pittorica*, vol. ii. p. 193.

have, at remote epochs, chosen the grand dramatic story of the king of Israel, as a subject worthy of their high conceptions and consummate art—Salvator Rosa, Alfieri, and Byron. It is remarkable that the first and last should have selected precisely the same poetical incident in the life of Saul; and that the picture of one might serve as an illustration of the poem of the other: with this difference, that the graphic power of the Italian painter all centres in her whose "*spell could raise the dead,*" and in him who hearkens to that fearful prophecy—

"Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul:"

while the descriptive powers of the English poet, still more imaginative and ideal, are principally directed to that "*Phantom Seer,*" who

"Stood the centre of a cloud!"

The grouping is the same in both; and both are of those high-wrought and splendid conceptions, which Mediocrity never "dreams

of in *her own* philosophy," and scarcely understands while she affects to admire it in others. The Saul of Salvator Rosa shared the triumph of his Regulus and his Catiline; and his reputation as a painter, like his life, had now reached its solstice:—to move was to descend *

Still, however, "the something unpossessed" was coveted in the midst of all the triumph won by merit over calumny; and while all Europe had become his gallery, he pined in thought over the deep but imaginary mortification of being still excluded from all the public

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* "Samuel et Saul, et la grande Bataille, sont toujours ici (à Paris). Celui de Samuel est une des belles productions de ce maitre (S. Rosa), parceque le sujet sombre et mystérieux a rencontré le génie de l'artiste: il est à remarquer qu'une teinte sombre caracterise toutes les productions de cet homme, qui a été, tout à la fois, peintre, poète satirique, et comédien bouffon."

Extract of a letter from the Baron Denon to the author of the "Life and Times of Salvator Rosa," on her asking him if the "Saul" of Salvator Rosa was still in the Musée Royal of Paris.

works in Rome—that city, whose suffrages he over-rated, as persons will overrate the good opinion of those among whom they dwell, and with whose passions, habits, and interests, their own are in daily contact.

Names now only preserved in the chronological lists of pictorial history, were then affixed to the great altar-pieces of the noblest churches in Rome; and the *médiocre* Romanelli, under the special patronage of Bernini, (who took him up in opposition to Pietro da Cortona, as he had once favoured Cortona out of malice to Sacchi,) was painting for Saint Peter's at Rome, and for the Duomo at Viterbo, while Salvator could not obtain the painting of those subordinate parts assigned to the pupils of any of the great masters of the day.

The spell, however, cast over the hopes and ambition of persecuted genius by party spirit and academic intrigues, was at last broken; and the joy he felt at being permitted

to give "*un quadro permanente al pubblico*," a permanent picture to the Roman public, is frankly expressed with a sort of childish triumph, in one of his letters to the Abate Ricciardi.

"*Sonate le campane!*—Ring out the chimes! —At last, after thirty years existence in Rome, of hopes blasted, and complaints reiterated against men and gods, the occasion is accorded me for giving one altar-piece to the public. The Signor Filippo Nerli, the Pope's *Depositario*, resolved upon vanquishing the obstinacy of my destiny, has endowed a chapel in the church of San Giovanni de' Fiorentini; and in despite of the stars themselves, has determined that I shall paint the altar-piece. It is five months since I began it, and I had only laid it aside with the intention of taking it up after Lent, when the occurrence of the *festa*, which the Florentines are obliged to celebrate here in this church, on the canonization of the *Santa Maddelina de' Pazzi*, has

forced me to continue to work at it, and to shut myself up in my house, where, for this month and half, I have been suffering agonies lest I should not have my picture finished in time for their festival. This occupation has kept me not only secluded from all commerce of the pen, but from every other in the world; and I can truly say that I have forgotten myself, even to neglecting to eat; and so arduous is my application, that when I had nearly finished, I was obliged to keep my bed for two days; and had not my recovery been assisted by emetics, certain it is it would have been all over with me, in consequence of some obstruction in the stomach. Pity me then, dear friend, if for the glory of my pencil, I have neglected to devote my pen to the service of friendship."

This is a most animated picture of genius excited by encouragement and the love of fame, even beyond the consideration of all personal wants and enjoyments; of the frail physical force giving way under the exertions

of intellectual energy, and of the mind surviving all the subordinate agents and corporal faculties, which were to assist in realizing its powerful combinations!

Salvator, stretched on his couch, within sight of his unfinished altar-piece — almost reduced to death by his efforts to procure immortality—at a moment, too, when that great meed was already well won,—is an image to which all young artists, all aspiring geniuses, should turn their mind's eye; as the zealous in faith gaze devoutly on the pictured martyrs, whose glory has been the purchase of their sufferings and their sacrifices.

If the painting of this great altar-piece gave Salvator such joy, and caused him such deep anxiety and arduous occupation, it may well be supposed that the moment of its exposition was one of no faint interest to the sanguine painter. The day when any great work was exposed for the first time to the public, was always, in Italy, what the first night of a new

tragedy once was in Paris—every body was prepared to criticise and to decide, to blame or to praise! Salvator, always acting out of ordinary calculation, exhibited on this occasion considerable *sang-froid.* While the chapel of the Nerli, in the *Chiesa de' Fiorentini,* was crowded with spectators, all pressing forward to see the "Martyrdom of Saint Cosmus and Saint Damian," the first altar-piece ever exhibited in Rome by "*Il Signore Salvatore,*" the Signor Salvator himself was taking his wonted evening's lounge on the Monte Pincio, arm in arm with his dear friend Carlo Rossi. The graphic description of Passeri's interview with him on that day, as given by the quaint and reverend painter himself, is well worth citing:—"He (Salvator) had at last exposed his picture in the *San Giovanni de' Fiorentini;* and I, to recreate myself, ascended on that evening to the heights of the *Monte della Trinità,* where I found Salvator walking arm in arm with Signor Giovanni Carlo dei Rossi,

so celebrated for his performance on the harp of three strings *(tre registri)*, and brother to that Luigi Rossi, who is so eminent all over the world for his perfection in musical composition. And when Salvator (who was my intimate friend) perceived me, he came forward laughingly, and said to me these precise words:—'Well, what say the malignants now? are they at last convinced that I *can* paint on the great scale? Why, if not, then e'en let Michael Angelo come down and do something better. Now at least I have stopt their mouths, and shewn the world what I am worth.' I shrugged my shoulders. I and the Signor Rossi changed the subject to one which lasted us till night-fall; and from this (continues Passeri in his rambling way) it may be gathered how *gagliardo* he (Salvator) was in his own opinion. Yet it may not be denied but that he had all the endowments of a marvellous great painter! one of great resources and high perfection; and had he no other merit, he had at least that of being

the originater of his own style. He spoke, this evening, of Paul Veronese more than of any other painter, and loved the Venetian school greatly. To Raphael he had no great leaning, for it was the fashion of the Neapolitan school to call him hard, '*di pietra*,' dry, &c."

The subject chosen by Salvator for his first and last altar-piece in Rome, was in perfect harmony with his own dark bold style. Saint Damian and Saint Cosmus were the victims of the cruel intolerance of Lysias, the Roman Proconsul of the city of Egea; they were by him condemned to be burnt alive, with as little humanity as the successors of the saints ever displayed when in their turn they condemned all who refused their doctrine to the flames of an *auto da fé*. Salvator chose that moment when the brother saints were stretched upon a pile of burning wood, the flames of which, instead of consuming their bodies, spread forth on every side, and pursued the ministers of intolerance who were assembled to enjoy the tor-

tures of the martyrs. It is in the amazement and terror expressed in the countenances of the objects of this miracle, and the variety of the attitudes into which they are thrown, that all the characteristic force of Salvator's genius is particularly displayed. "*Chi vuol ricercare in questo quadro un esattezza di disegno, io non saprei che mi dire se non ce la trova,*" (says Passeri, speaking of this performance in all the freshness of immediate observation) "*dico bene che è di mano di Salvatore Rosa!*" "Whoever looks in this picture for precision in the drawing, I know not what to say if he does not find it there; but I can say that it is by the hand of Salvator Rosa!" The opinion of the Marchese Nerli was more decidedly given in the form of a crimson velvet purse filled with gold, and presented gallantly to Salvator Rosa on a silver *guantiera*, or glove-*etui*, a curious trait of the manners of the times; when gloves were so rich and ornamented, as to be laid by in such caskets as were then, and now are appropriated

to jewels. But gloves then were pitted against ladies' *hearts*, and, bauble for bauble, were perhaps well worth the trinket they purchased.

When Salvator counted out the thousand *scudi* which the velvet purse contained, he declared frankly, that the liberality of the Marchese was as much beyond the value of the picture as it was beyond the expectation of the painter; and he instantly sent back an hundred doubloons. The Marchese, however, would not accept the money, and wrote to Salvator, "that in this contest he was resolved on remaining *il Vincitore!* Salvator yielded; but at the expiration of a few days he sent his generous friend one of his finest landscapes for his gallery, "which," (says the relater of the anecdote) "was well worth the hundred doubloons he had obliged him to accept." But neither the approbation of the liberal Nerli, nor the applauses of Salvator's partisans*, could conceal from him that his

* The partisans of Salvator seem to have been no less

altar-piece was undergoing the severest criticism from the partial and the prejudiced; and in spite of all his gay and jocular vaunts on the evening of its exposition, Passeri confesses "that he was by no means satisfied with its success." His mind, however, was drawn off from its brooding disappointment, by the zealous and never slumbering friendship of Carlo Rossi, who was resolved to follow the example of the Marchese Nerli, and to purchase and endow a chapel, for the purpose of assigning the altar-piece to the pencil of Rosa.

Salvator, who spoke out upon all subjects with an hardiness that belonged to a better age, had frequently declaimed against the actual state of Rome in his time; and he used to place in satirical contrast its sumptuous palaces, with its close, narrow, and unventilated lanes

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violent than his enemies upon this occasion: they were, says Passeri, quite *uproarious* with their deafening acclamations—"*Strepitassero con ischiamazzi orrendi.*"

and streets, and with what he called those "*mal-ordinate casaccie*," in which the inferior classes of its population were crammed; but, above all, he was wont to exclaim against the state of the principal entrance of a city which had been the "world's great mistress," and was still the temple of the arts. The *Porta Flaminia* (now the *Porta del Popolo*), through which all Europe poured the most distinguished of her sons, was then the entrance to a labyrinth of dark and filthy passages, obstructed by ruinous and tottering edifices—the wretched asylum of pauperism and vice. Salvator, in the hearing of Baldinucci and others, frequently proposed, as an undertaking worthy of the Government, the clearing away of these infected buildings, and the opening a noble space at the entrance of the city, to be decorated by two public edifices for the reception of strangers—an accommodation then particularly wanting in Rome, where travellers were wont to pass days in the streets, in houseless discom-

fort, vainly seeking for lodgings, the inns being few and miserable. But, while fabrics of ostentatious splendour were then rising on every side in Rome, works of utility were still neglected; and the noxious passages and ruinous buildings which choked the Porta Flaminia, might still have remained in all their original deformity, but that the threatened visit of that royal *Bergère derangée*, the Queen Christina of Sweden to Pope Alexander VII, set Bernini to work to clear a passage for her entrance: and the now beautiful Piazza del Popolo was the result of the courtly artist's desire to render the pathway of royalty worthy of so illustrious a pilgrimage. In place, however, of the much-wanted public hotels or inns proposed by Salvator Rosa, two churches were rapidly built, which were not wanted at all. These were the elegant little temples which rise on either side the ingress to the Corso—the *Chiesa di S. Maria de' Miracoli*, and the *Chiesa di S. Maria del Monte Santo*. They were

built in 1662, and do infinite honour to the memory of their architect, the *Cavaliere Rainaldi.*

Carlo Rossi was the first to purchase a chapel in one of these pretty churches, then an object of emulation among the wealthy Italians, as the purchase of an opera-box is now among the wealthy English. But friendship appears to have had at least as much to do as piety in the acquisition. The *Capella dei Rossi*, to the right of the nave in the *Chiesa di Santa Maria del Monte Santo*, was scarcely rough cast, when its owner dedicated it not more to his patron saint, than to the genius of his admired friend. Salvator, who felt the full force of this kindness, began to make designs for the altar-piece and lateral departments; but languor and lassitude induced him to defer an undertaking to which he was desirous of bringing all those energies of his genius, which had gone to the execution of his Saul and his Catiline. It is melancholy to add, that this epoch never arrived.

The hand of decay had already touched him; the spirit had gone out of him; and whoever now visits Rome, and may think it worth while to turn into the *Chiesa di Santa Maria del Santo Monte* will see, in the first chapel on the right, a monument of that friendship which death could not dissolve. Four pictures of Salvator Rosa's, hung up in this little chapel after his decease, by the hands of one his earliest and his last friend, Carlo Rossi, are proofs of that posthumous tenderness which still devoted the sacred spot to its original destiny, and mingled the purest of all human affections with the holiest of all human sentiments.*

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* Since the above was written, I have it on the authority of Signor Camucini (through the kindness of her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire), that these pictures are now transferred to the gallery of his Royal Highness Prince Leopold of Naples—a transfer nothing short of sacrilege in the eyes of the pictorial sentimentalist! The two largest of these pictures were, in 1819, apparently much injured by neglect and damp. The subjects were

The views, the feelings, the very sensations of Salvator, were now contracting and fading fast under the influence of an overwrought mind, an exhausted brain, and morbid sensibility, too frequently and fatally excited. His habits changed with his health; he no longer sought to extend his sphere of action; all his feelings were home-directed, gathering fast round that domestic altar, the last asylum of affections which the world has failed to meet or to satisfy. In his letters written at this period, he frequently speaks of his "*fireside*," that solecism in an Italian establishment so rarely seen or understood. He thinks "*an half eye*" drawn by Farfinnochio, a subject worth communicating to the grave professor of moral philosophy

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the Passion of Jesus Christ, and the Liberation of the Prophet Habakkuk by an Angel. In another chapel in the same church is (or *was* recently) an Holy Family by Salvator's contemporary, Carlo Maratti, a fine picture, but nearly ruined by the humidity of the place.

of the University of Pisa; and details all the minute shades or tremulous vibrations of his nervous temperament, with the accuracy of one who was now wholly devoted to a self-analysis. The wanderer of the savage Abruzzi, the dweller in caves, the prowler of blasted heaths, who stood the brunt of storms that "scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines," and trod with bounding step

"Over many a fiery, many a frozen Alp,"

now shrunk cowering from "the seasons' changes," shivered if snow whitened the distant hills of Albano, and languished if the sirocco blew over the groves of the Quirinal, though fraught with "*native perfume*;"

Whispering whence it stole its balmy spoil.

How much of his original fire was quenching, how rapidly those inward energies were changing, which repel all external influence of the elements in the morn and noon of life—was painfully exhibited in his eighteenth letter to Ricciardi, dated so far back as 1666! He

there complains that "the severity of the year had all but destroyed him;" and adds, "that in great heats his head became quite distempered, in severe cold he was ready to give up the ghost, and to bid *good night* to his genius, with a '*to our merry meeting at the pit of Acheron!*' I have suffered two months of agony," he continues, "even with the abstemious regimen of chicken broth! My feet are two lumps of ice, in spite of the woollen hose I have imported from Venice. I never permit the fire to be quenched in my own room, and am more solicitous than even the Cavalier Cigoli.* There is not a fissure in my house that I am not daily employed in diligently stopping up; and yet with all this I cannot get warm; nor do I think the torch of love, or the caresses of a Phryne

* Lodovico Cardi da Cigoli, a celebrated painter of the sixteenth century, who in spite of every precaution died of a cold taken while painting *in fresco* in the Vatican. The humidity of the plaster is said to have killed him.

herself, would kindle me into a glow. For the rest, I can talk of any thing but my pencil: my canvass lies turned to the walls; my colours are dried up now and for ever;—nor can I give my thoughts to any subject whatever, except chimney-corners, brasiers, warming-pans, woollen gloves, woollen caps, and such sort of gear. In short, dear friend, I am perfectly aware that I have lost much of my original ardours, and I am absolutely reduced to pass entire days without speaking a word: those fires, once mine, and once so brilliant, are now all spent, or evaporating in smoke. Woe unto me, should I now be reduced to exercise my pencil for bread! I should die in the harness. If you ask me how I pass my time, I answer,—in winter days, when the weather is serene, I wander forth like a maniac, prowling in all the solitudes of this region; in bad weather I shut myself up in my house, walking like one possessed; or in reading, or in listening, much more than in talking. Not a single week

passes that orders do not arrive for pictures, to such an extent that I am covered with reproaches from all quarters; but I let them cry. None know where the shoe pinches so well as he that wears it."

This curious and interesting letter, which was written even before he painted his great picture of Saul, betrays the warning symptoms of Nature's great break-up, and the powers of a noble mind, rallying back from the stealing influence of progressive decay, and triumphing for a period even over Nature herself, when worked on by strong volition. His picture of St. Turpin, begun in October 1669, and finished in the early part of 1670, was probably his last work of any importance.

He now painted but little, and no longer sought for new subjects in nature, animate or inanimate. His mind was a repertory, in which his wondrous memory had deposited an exhaustless store of imagery; and it is a curious fact, that early impressions at this period came

up to the surface of his recollection with such strength and freshness, that whatever he produced was a strikingly recognizable portrait of those scenes in Apuglia and the Abruzzi, where he had loitered with greatest fondness in his boyhood: "all, says Baldinucci, was preserved *nella sua tenacissima fantasia.*" He worked, however, only at remote intervals, and in the spring season; and thus added another name to the list of those sensitive children of genius, whose mental dependence on "seasons and their changes" has awakened the incredulity, or excited the derision, of one whose own sturdy and steam-engine intellect was always to be thrown into movement, as the exigency of the moment demanded.*

Surrounded by old friends, the Rossi, Passeri, Baldinucci, Baldovini, Oliva†, and others of the

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton.

† The celebrated Padre Gio. Paolo Oliva, general of the Jesuits.

same standing, and of the same tried and sterling worth, Salvator, partly at their request, and partly to give vent to a "*mordacità*" of temperament, which experience had rather sharpened than blunted, began about the latter end of the year 1671 a series of caricature portraits.

This style of painting, then so much in vogue by the name of *Caricata*, had been pursued by Caravaggio, was practised with great success by Domenichino, and had formed his principal recreation during his retreat from the persecution of the Neapolitan cabals in the shades of Frescati. It had been adopted by Guido*, and it was a

* A Roman tailor was so enraptured with the caricatures of Caravaggio, that he engaged the young and unknown Guido Reni to paint him several heads in that peculiar *genre*. The obscure artist, the future creator of the Celestial Aurora, gladly engaged with the patronizing tailor at seven scudi *per head;* but his Mæcenas of the needle was so pleased with his productions, that he raised his price to twelve, and at last to thirty scudi. At the same moment, the Cardinal Farnese was haggling with

branch of the art, says Baldinucci, "for which he (Salvator) had a most *bizarre* talent, which he exercised with great spirit"— "*aveva un bizarrissima facoltà e fu per certo spiritoso*," &c.

The *Caricata* was in painting what the broad comedy of farce is in the drama. It was nature strongly drawn, its ridicules exaggerated, and its foibles highly coloured; but still it was nature: and the *Caricata* of the seventeenth century is never to be confounded with those coarse and libellous representations of the human face divine, which humour and malice have frequently resorted to in modern times for the manifestation of their powers. Among his collections of *Caricati*, Salvator had not only preserved, at their particular requests, the likenesses of his own friends, with all their characteristic peculiarities, but had added also those of many

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Guido's immortal master, Annibal Caracci, who died the victim of the ostentatious parsimony of the mean and princely protector.

other noted persons in Rome; and he was finishing the precious, and now invaluable, series with his own fine head* when the *pencil dropped from his hand*, and he found it impossible to continue the undertaking with the same spirit in which it had been commenced.† He turned his thoughts to other subjects, but he could not fix them—could not bring them to bear and rest

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* The author of these pages has not been able to discover the fate of these caricatures. Baldinucci says the Marchese Donato Guadagnata of Rome had a volume of his (Salvator's) designs, to the number of eighty, and ten sketches in small pictures. Many of the subjects were incidents in the lives of the ancient philosophers; others were landscapes *(veramente bellissime)*, and others were portraits, some "*di colpi caricati*," &c.

† It is evident, from the testimony of Baldinucci, that these caricatures were not undertaken in a satirical or malicious spirit; and that Salvator was urged to execute them by the friends who sat as originals. "*Egli che per far caricature era in supremo grado eccellente, crede di non poterlo meglio servire che col fargli tutti di questi*," &c.

upon a given point—attention wearied in the effort! All continuity of idea was broken up, all permanency of abstraction dissolved, and the grand but disjointed conceptions which still floated in the vague of his mighty but rapidly exhausting imagination, resembled the scattered wreck of some goodly and splendid bark, which, tossed by the winds and floating on the waves, still exhibits, in its vast but shattered fragments, specimens of high ingenuity and powerful combination.

He was the first, himself, to feel that his faculties were failing; and his brilliant spirit sunk at once under the painful and humiliating conviction. It was in vain that his family and his friends attempted to argue him out of this belief of a mental decline; against which, however, he struggled, by occasionally affecting to resume his art with all his wonted ardour. When they talked kindly but idly, he only shook his head significantly; and, in reply to some of their common-places of regret and con-

dolence, was wont to answer—"*Questo interviene à chi vuol dipingere e scrivere per l'eternità.*" "It is the destiny reserved for those who would paint and write for eternity"—a bold, but in him not an unfounded boast! His family physician, and those who had most influence over him, endeavoured to dissuade him from all mental as well as manual occupation. His books and easel were removed, and he gradually sunk into a listless indolence, strongly contrasted to the wonted moral and physical activity of "one who," says Passeri, "till now was always so worthily occupied." A change in his complexion was thought to indicate some derangement of the liver, and he continued in a state of great languor and depression during the autumn of 1672; but in the winter 1673, the total loss of appetite, and of all power of digestion, reduced him almost to the last extremity; and he consented, at the earnest request of Lucrezia and his numerous friends, to take more medical advice. He now,

passed through the hands of various physicians, whose ignorance and technical pedantry come out with characteristic effect in the simple and matter-of-fact details which the good Padre Baldovini has left of the last days of his eminent friend.* Various cures were suggested by the Roman faculty for a disease which none had yet ventured to name. Meantime the malady increased, and shewed itself in all the

* Francesco Baldovini was a Florentine priest, and a devoted friend of Salvator Rosa. He is described as being "noted in the republic of letters" of that time—"Uomo notissimo nella republica delle lettere." But he must not be confounded with the admirable author of "*Il Lamento di Cecco da Varlunga* †," a delicious little burlesque poem written in the *Lingua Contadinesca*, and still read with avidity in Italy. The prose of the Padre Francesco Baldovini is quaint and involved, and his opinions are bigoted and narrow.

† Francesco Baldovini, the author of "*Il Lamento di Cecco*," was born in 1654, and was consequently not twenty years of age when Salvator died.

life-wearing symptoms of sleeplessness, loss of appetite, intermitting fever, and burning thirst. A French quack was called in to the sufferer, and his prescription was, that he should drink water abundantly, and nothing else but water. While, however, under the care of this Gallic Sangrado, a confirmed dropsy unequivocally declared itself; and Salvator, now acquainted with the nature of his disorder, once more submitted to the entreaties of his friends, and, at the special persuasion of the Padre Francesco Baldovini, placed himself under the care of a celebrated Italian empiric, then in great repute in Rome, called Doctor Penna.

Salvator had but little confidence in medicine. He had already, during this melancholy winter, discarded all his physicians, and literally "*thrown physic to the dogs;*" but hope, and spring, and love of life, revived together, and towards the latter end of February he consented to receive the visits of Penna, who had cured Baldovini (on the good Padre's own word) of a confirmed

dropsy the year before. When the doctor was introduced, Salvator, with his wonted manliness, called on him to answer the question, he was about to propose, with honesty and frankness, viz. "*was his disorder incurable?*"

Penna, after going through certain professional forms, answered "that his disorder was a simple, and not a complicated dropsy, and that therefore he was curable."

Salvator instantly and cheerfully placed himself in the doctor's hands, and consented to submit to whatever he should prescribe. "The remedy of Penna," says Baldovini, "*lay in seven* little vials, of which the contents of one were to be swallowed every day." But it was obvious to all, that, as the seven vials were emptied, the disorder of Salvator increased; and on the seventh day of his attendance, the doctor declared to his friend Baldovini, that the malady of his patient was beyond his reach and skill.

The friends of Salvator now suggested to him their belief, that his disease was brought

on and kept up by his rigid confinement to the house, so opposed to his former active habits of life; but when they urged him to take air and exercise, he replied significantly to their importunities, "I take exercise! I go out! if this is your counsel, how are you deceived!" At the earnest request, however, of Penna, he consented to see him once more; but the moment he entered his room, he demanded of him, "if he *now* thought that he was curable?" Penna, in some emotion, prefaced his verdict by declaring solemnly, "that he should conceive it no less glory to restore so illustrious a genius to health, and to the society he was so calculated to adorn, than to save the life of the Sovereign Pontiff himself; but that, as far as his science went, the case was now beyond the reach of human remedy." While Penna spoke, Salvator, who was surrounded by his family and many friends, fixed his penetrating eyes on the physician's face, with the intense look of one who sought to read his sentence in the counte-

nance of his judge ere it was verbally pronounced;—but that sentence was now passed! and Salvator, who seemed more struck by surprise than by apprehension, remained silent and in a fixed attitude! His friends, shocked and grieved, or awed by the expression of his countenance, which was marked by a stern and hopeless melancholy, arose and departed silently one by one. After a long and deep reverie, Rosa suddenly left the room, and shut himself up alone in his study. There in silence, and in unbroken solitude, he remained for two days, holding no communication with his wife, his son, or his most intimate friends; and when at last their tears and lamentations drew him forth, he was no longer recognizable. Shrunk, feeble, attenuated, almost speechless, he sunk on his couch, to rise no more!

If the motive of this self-incarceration and rigid abstinence originated in his stoical principles—if he had resolved to meet death half way, and to escape the lingering sufferings of

a slow and mortifying decline*, he had nearly effected his purpose. His long fast had not only preyed on his vital functions, it had enfeebled and laid waste all that remained of his mental energies; and the drooping sadness that bent down his harassed spirit and exhausted frame was mistaken by the bigoted, or misrepresented by the malignant, as the timidity and despair of a conscience ill at ease. The kind and shallow Baldovini saw nothing in the melancholy of Salvator, but the fear of purgatory, or the apprehension of more permanent sufferings; and he consoled him, or endeavoured to do so, by assuring him that the devil had no power, even in hell, over those who had been baptized by the holy name of Salvator. "While I spoke thus," (says the good Padre,) "Salvator smiled."

In this death-bed smile, (the last, perhaps, ever given by Salvator to human absurdity,) there is something singularly characteristic and

* See his allusion to this in one of his letters.

affecting. For this depression of spirit, the Padre Passeri saw another cause, more influential than even the terrors of purgatory. It was Salvator's connexion with Lucrezia—a singular delicacy of conscience in an Italian of the seventeenth century! But the two clerical friends of Salvator did not overlook their calling in their friendship; nor forget that if the conscience of the dying did not calumniate their lives, there would be nothing left for the church's intercession; and that its influence and revenues would rapidly decrease together.

It is asserted by all the biographers of Salvator, that he did not marry Lucrezia until his last illness. But what is most singular in the event is, that the church itself stood opposed to the reparation he was anxious (though late) to make, to one who appears to have been blameless in every respect, save in her connexion with him; and he was obliged to have recourse to some influential persons, to obtain

a licence from the Vicario to make that woman a wife, whom he had been so long permitted to retain as his mistress in the midst of his numerous ecclesiastical friends.

Life was now wearing away with such obvious rapidity, that his friends both clerical and laical, urged him in the most strenuous manner, to submit to the ceremonies and forms prescribed by the Roman Catholic church in such awful moments. How much the solemn sadness of those moments may be increased, even to terror and despair, by such pompous and lugubrious pageants, all who have visited Italy—all who still visit it, can testify.

Salvator demanded what they required of him. They replied, "in the first instance to receive the sacrament as it is administered in Rome to the dying." "To receiving the sacrament," says his confessor, Baldovini, "he shewed no repugnance (*non se mostrò repugnante;*) but he vehemently and positively refused to

allow the host, with all the solemn pomp of its procession, to be brought to his house, which he deemed unworthy of the divine presence. He objected to the holy ostentation of the ceremony, to its *éclat*, to the noise and bustle, and smoke and heat, it would create in the close chamber of the sick. He indeed appears to have objected to more than it was discreet to object to in Rome: and all that his family and his confessor could extort from him on the subject was, that he would permit himself to be carried from his bed to the parish church, and there in the humility of a contrite heart, would consent to receive the sacrament at the foot of the altar.

As immediate death might have been the consequence of this act of indiscretion, his family, who were scarcely less interested for a life so precious than for the soul which was the object of their pious apprehensions, gave up the point altogether; and from the vehemence with which Salvator spoke on the subject, and the agitation it had occasioned, they carefully

avoided renewing a proposition, which had rallied all his force of character and volition to their long-abandoned post.

The rejection of a ceremony which was deemed in Rome indispensably necessary to salvation, and by one who was already stamped with the church's reprobation, soon took air; report exaggerated the circumstance into a positive expression of infidelity; and the gossipry of the Roman anterooms was supplied for the time with a subject of discussion, in perfect harmony with their slander, bigotry, and idleness.

"As I went forth from Salvator's door," relates the worthy Baldovini, "I met the *Canonico Scornio*, a man who has taken out a licence to speak of all men as he pleases. 'And how goes it with Salvator?' demands of me this Canonico. 'Bad enough, I fear.'—'Well, a few nights back, happening to be in the anteroom of a certain great prelate, I found myself in the centre of a circle of disputants, who were

busily discussing whether the aforesaid Salvator would die a schismatic, a Huguenot, a Calvinist, or a Lutheran?'—'He will die, Signor Canonico,' I replied, 'when it pleases God, a better Catholic than any of those who now speak so slightingly of him!'—and so I pursued my way."

This *Canonico*, whose sneer at the undecided faith of Salvator roused all the bile of the tolerant and charitable Baldovini, was the near neighbour of Salvator, a frequenter of his hospitable house, and one of whom the credulous Salvator speaks in one of his letters as being "his neighbour, and an excellent gentleman."

On the following day, as the Padre sat by the pillow of the suffering Rosa, he had the simplicity, in the garrulity of his heart, to repeat all these malicious insinuations and idle reports to the invalid:—"but," says Baldovini, "as I spoke, Rosa only shrugged his shoulders."

Early on the morning of the 15th of March,

that month so delightful in Rome, the affectionate and anxious confessor, who seems to have been always at his post, ascended the *Monte della Trinità*, for the purpose of taking up his usual place at the bed's head of the fast-declining Salvator. The young Agosto flew to meet him at the door, and, with a countenance radiant with joy, informed him of the good news, "that his '*Signor* Padre' had given evident symptoms of recovery, in consequence of the bursting of an inward ulcer."

Baldovini followed the sanguine boy to his father's chamber. But, to all appearance, Salvator was suffering great agony. "How goes it with thee, Rosa?" asked Baldovini kindly, as he approached him.

"Bad, bad!" was the emphatic reply. While writhing with pain, the sufferer after a moment added:—"To judge by what I now endure, the hand of death grasps me sharply."

In the restlessness of pain, he now threw himself on the edge of the bed, and placed his

head on the bosom of Lucrezia, who sat supporting and weeping over him. His afflicted son and friend took their station at the other side of his couch, and stood watching the issue of these sudden and frightful spasms in mournful silence. At that moment a celebrated Roman physician, the Doctor Catanni, entered the apartment. He felt the pulse of Salvator, and perceived that he was fast sinking. He communicated his approaching dissolution to those most interested in the melancholy intelligence, and it struck all present with unutterable grief. Baldovini, however, true to his sacred calling, even in the depth of his human affliction, instantly dispatched the young Agosto to the neighbouring Convent *della Trinità*, for the holy Viaticum. While life was still fluttering at the heart of Salvator, the officiating priest of the day arrived, bearing with him the holy apparatus of the last mysterious ceremony of the church. The shoulders of Salvator were laid bare, and anointed with the consecrated oil;

some prayed fervently, others wept, and all even still hoped; but the taper which the Doctor Catanni held to the lips of Salvator, while the Viaticum was administered, burned brightly and steadily! Life's last sigh had transpired, as religion performed her last rite.

Between that luminous and soul-breathing form of genius and the clod of the valley, there was now no difference; and the "end and object" of man's brief existence was now accomplished in him, who, while yet all young and ardent, had viewed the bitter perspective of humanity with a philosophic eye, and pronounced even on the bosom of pleasure,

"*Nasci pœna—Vita labor—Necesse mori.*"

On the evening of the day of the 15th of March, 1673, the all that remained of the author of Regulus, of Catiline, and of the Satires—of the gay Formica, the witty Coviello! —of the elegant composer, and greatest painter of his time and country—of Salvator Rosa! was

conveyed to the tomb, in the church of *Santa Maria degli Angioli alle Terme*, that magnificent temple! unrivalled even at Rome in interest and grandeur, and which now stands as it stood when it formed the *Pinacotheca* of the Thermæ of Dioclesian! There, accompanied by much funeral pomp*, the body of Salvator lay in state: the head and face, according to the Italian custom, exposed to view. All Rome poured into the vast circumference of the church to take a last view of the painter of the Roman people! the "*Nostro Signor Salvatore*" of the Pantheon: and the popular feelings of regret and admiration were expressed with the usual bursts of audible emotion, in which Italian sensibility on such occasions loves to indulge. Some few there were, who gathered closely and in silence round the bier of the great master

* Fu il giorno sequente con magnifica pompa funebre esposto nella Chiesa della Madonna degli Angioli alle Terme, &c.—*Pascoli.*

of the Neapolitan school; and who, weeping the loss of the man, forgot for a moment even that genius which had already secured its own meed of immortality. These were Carlo Rossi, Francesco Baldóvini, and Paolo Oliva, of whom each returned from the grave of the friend he loved, to record the high endowments and powerful talents of the painter he admired, and the poet he revered. Baldovini retired to his cell to write the "Life of Salvator Rosa," and then to resign his own; Oliva to his monastery, to compose the epitaph which is still read on the tomb of his friend; and Carlo Rossi to select from his gallery such works of his own beloved painter, as might best adorn the walls of that chapel now exclusively consecrated to his memory.

On the following night the remains of Salvator Rosa were deposited, with all the awful forms of the Roman church, in a grave opened expressly in the beautiful vestibule of *Santa Maria degli Angioli alle Terme*. Never did the ashes of departed genius find a more appro-

priate resting-place! The Pinacotheca of the Thermæ of Dioclesian had once been the repository of all that the genius of antiquity had perfected in the arts; and in the vast interval of time which had since elapsed, it had suffered no change, save that impressed upon it by the mighty mind of Michael Angelo!*

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* Of the original vastness of the Baths of Dioclesian, some idea may be formed in the present day, by the ground they occupied being covered by villas, gardens, churches, and monasteries. The principal hall of the Thermæ, the Pinacotheca (so called from its having contained the finest specimens of painting and sculpture, at a period when it was said there were more statues than men in Rome) was with its gigantic columns, (each of one solid piece of granite,) standing in perfect preservation, when Pius IV. resolved on converting it into a Christian temple. Fortunately the few changes to be effected were committed to the superintendence of a genius, itself of the true antique mould, and the Santa Maria degli Angioli owes it to Michael Angelo, that of all the churches of the Christian capital, it stands unrivalled in its simple majesty and noble proportions.

Near the tomb of Salvator Rosa, rises that of his great

The tomb of Salvator Rosa is surmounted by his bust; and on the monument raised to his memory, by the filial piety of his son Agosto, may be read the following inscription*:—

D. O. M.
SALVATOREM ROSAM NEAPOLITANUM
PICTORUM SUI TEMPORIS
NULLI SECUNDUM,
POETARUM OMNIUM TEMPORUM
PRINCIPIBUS PAREM,
AUGUSTUS FILIUS
HIC MOERENS COMPOSUIT.
SEXAGENARIO MINOR OBIIT
ANNO SALUTIS MDCLXXIII.
IDIBUS MARTII.

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contemporary Carlo Maratti, "both," says the Cicerone of the church (a monk of the adjoining convent of the Certosa) "both *Valenti Pittori.*"

* Crescimbeni, in his *Storia della volgare Poesia*, asserts, that this inscription was composed by the General of the Jesuits, Paolo Oliva.

CHAPTER XI.

Description of Salvator's person—His style of conversation—His vogue—His School—Bartolommeo Torrigianni—Gi. Ghesolfi—Augustus Rosa—Pietro Montanini—Harry Cook—His Imitators—The late Cavaliere Fidenza of Rome—Salvator's domestic character and manner—His sons and descendants—His property at the time of his death—*His merits as a Painter* (opinions of the most celebrated Masters)—as an Engraver—as a Musical composer—His social talents—His erudition—His poetry—State of Italian literature in the seventeenth century—State of the press—Marini, his followers in Italy and in England—Satirical and burlesque poets of Italy—Satires of Salvator Rosa—Their character and tendency—Cause of the diatribes of contemporary critics—Their calumnies—Reputation of Salvator's poetry in Italy in the present day.

SALVATOR, (according to Passeri,) though not above the middle stature, exhibited in his

movements much grace and activity. His complexion, though dark, was of that true African colouring, which was far from displeasing; his eyes were of a deep blue and full of fire; his hair, black and luxuriant, fell in undulating rings over his shoulders. He dressed elegantly, but not in the court fashion; for he wore no gold-lace or superfluous finery. Bold and prompt in discourse, he intimidated all who conversed with him; and none ventured openly to oppose him, because he was a tenacious and stern upholder of the opinions he advanced. In the discussion of precepts, erudition, and science, he kept clear in the first instance from the minutiæ of particulars, but, adhering to generals, he watched and seized his moment to rush into his subject, and make his point good. It was then he shewed himself well furnished for the discussion, and this little artifice he practised with infinite skill. He had won over many friends and many partisans to his own way of

thinking; and had also raised against him many enemies, who attacked his opinions. Between these parties disputes frequently arose in his assemblies, which sometimes led to scandalous ruptures.

Many of his followers had joined him from coincidence of taste, and others merely for notoriety, and to obtain the reputation of notable persons, by associating with Salvator Rosa. The post which he held in his profession was one of high esteem; because he knew how to maintain his dignity with courtesy, and was, generally speaking, only to be won by prayers and entreaties.*

His school produced but few worthy successors, because his ambition never led him to surround himself with pupils; although it is true many have *aped* and affected to imitate him, but at an immeasurable distance. Bartolommeo Torrigiani† alone came near him in his aerial

* Passeri.

† "Bartolommeo Torrigiani fu scolaro di Salvator

tints, but he died young. Some noisy picture-brokers (hucksters, "*Rivendaglioli,*") however, would have puffed this painter up to an equality with his master, when they had his landscapes on hand! Ghesolfi Milanese, (his other pupil) a man of talent and reputation, particularly in perspectives with little figures, acknowledges himself deeply indebted to the instructions of Salvator, and in truth he has drunk deeply of his good maxims, which included many of the perfections of the art and the pencil. In addition to these pupils of Salvator's school mentioned by Passeri, one of whom was living when he wrote, Salvator had two others besides his son Augustus, viz. Pietro Montanini, and a young Englishman of the name of Cook*;

Rosa, e di poco inferiore al maestro nel paesaggio, ma nelle figure gli rimase a dietro assai, non avendo mai saputo accordarle."—*Ticozzi.*

* "Harry Cook went into Italy, and studied under Salvator Rosa."—*Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting.*

It has been already observed in these pages, that the

but it was by precept only he instructed them, for none ever saw him paint: (" *non voleva esser veduto da alcuni,*" says Pascoli.)

His imitators, however, have been countless; and it is supposed, that more than a fourth of the small landscapes ascribed to him, have been executed by those who rather exaggerated his faults, than copied his merits. Of those who closely followed him both in his defects and his excellencies, the most justly celebrated is the Cavaliere Fidenza of Rome*; but in all, the

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genius of Salvator Rosa was always justly estimated in England. Philip Pont, in his *Views of Derbyshire*, closely imitated his manner, which he made his peculiar study. " Our painters," says Horace Walpole, " draw rocks and castellated mountains and precipices, because Virgil gasped for breath in Naples, and Salvator Rosa wandered among Alps and Apennines."—*Ibid.*

* The Cavaliere Fidenza died a short time back in Rome. The most learned *cognoscenti* in the art have purchased his landscapes as originals of Salvator's: some, as such, have found their way to England and Ireland.

master-genius — the power of invention was wanting; and the best were but tame and servile imitators of the great and unrivalled original.

While the public character, the person, manner, and exterior modes of Salvator Rosa, such as he appeared in what is called the world, have been treated with amplitude by Passeri, others of his biographers have entered more deeply into the domestic qualities, the temperament, and daily habits of the private individual: and the *home* character of genius is always interesting. A thousand individual traits in the various biographical details, and above all in the private letters of Salvator Rosa, speak a man full of those warm and zealous affections which convert predilection into passion, and tinge even the most moderate sentiments with the ardour of enthusiasm. Headlong in his enmities as in his friendships, his bitterness to those he hated was finely contrasted by his tenderness to those he loved. In his private and domesticated manners, he

is said to have been full of amenity, pleasant humours, and confidential: "For the rest," says Pascoli, (who came to Rome while the impressions Salvator had made in its circles were still fresh,)—"For the rest, though Salvator was by temperament both sensual and sarcastic, those faults were compensated by virtues, which made them the more to be lamented, if not to be excused. For he was charitable, alms-giving, and generous; gracious and courteous; a decided enemy to falsehood and fiction, greedy of glory, eminent in all the professions to which he addicted himself, yet still prizing his talent more in that department of the arts, in which he did not excel, than in that line in which he had no competitor."

Salvator Rosa had two sons by Lucrezia. Rosalvo, the elder, died young at Naples *.

* Passeri says that Salvator sent his son Rosalvo to Naples to his brother ("*ad un suo fratello*") where he died of the plague. This is the only mention made of this brother in any of the lives of Salvator Rosa. I have heard traditionally that he was a monk.

Agosto, his heir, on the death of his father became possessed of a respectable and most interesting property. According to various authorities, he found himself master of eight thousand *scudi* in specie; letters of credit on the bank of the Rossi for seven thousand more, (the accumulated prices of pictures which Salvator had painted for, and left in the hands of this liberal and devoted friend); a collection of pictures (some few of Salvator's own were among the number); a library of valuable books; a quantity of rich furniture; a volume of Salvator's original designs, forming, says Pascoli, "*un grosso volume*,"* and his manuscript

* The drawings of Salvator Rosa are extremely scarce. The value placed even on his most careless sketches may be judged by the following anecdote:—Calling one day on Lorenzo Lippi at Florence, he was detained some time waiting for his friend, and to beguile his *ennui*, he took up a card and made a sketch on it. This card has reached posterity, and is now carefully preserved in the lid of a snuff-box, in the possession of the Prince Rozoumoffski, a Russian noble. In the Baron Denon's vast and pre-

writings, none of which, not even his satires, were published till after his death. The whole of this property was accumulated since the period of his last return to Rome.

When Pascoli wrote his life of Salvator Rosa, which, with his other lives, was published in 1731, Agosto Rosa was still living in his father's house, on the *Monte della Trinità*, with one son and one daughter. "The former," says Pascoli, "applied himself to architecture, and some part, if not all, of the genius of Salvator was still preserved in his descendants; for though he did not himself practise architecture as a profession, he understood it perfectly."

The Chevalier D'Agencourt, in his account of his visit to Rome, boasts of having "slept in Rosa's bed, and even within his very

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cious collection of original drawings, there is but one of Salvator's. "*Et encore*," observes the accomplished collector, in a letter to the author of this work—"*Encore n'a-t-il pas un degré de caractère, qui puisse faire juger de ce maitre.*"

curtains." When Doctor Burney resided in Rome in 1770, he found Salvator's house in the *Monte della Trinità*, inhabited by his great grand-daughter, from whom he purchased that volume of MS. music and poetry (the compositions of her illustrious ancestor), which but for the enterprising spirit of British genius had probably never seen the light. The immediate descendants of Rosa, bearing his name, still live in Rome; but, as far as the author of this Life of their immortal progenitor can discover, they are ignorant of every thing that concerns him, or unwilling to communicate the little that may yet be rescued from oblivion, of family tradition.

To the patent of Salvator's merit as a painter, the successive generations of nearly two centuries have set their seals, and time and posterity have long consecrated the judgment passed on his works by such contemporary critics as were not influenced by envy, nor warped by prejudice and party-spirit. The

opinions of Passeri (and the disciple and worshipper of Domenichino was no incompetent judge), of Baldinucci, of Pascoli, and of many other *virtuosi* of his own times, or of those which immediately followed them, are on record. The qualified eulogium of Sir Joshua Reynolds, (who, in refusing Salvator that grace which none but himself ever denied, accords him "all the sublimity and grandeur of the Sacred Volume from which he drew his subject of Jacob's Dream*,") has long been

* The peculiar characteristic of Salvator's figures is that spirited grace, as conspicuous in his banditti as in his Jason and St. George; the grace of movement, not of repose. Sir J. Reynolds has also observed, that "Salvator had that sort of dignity which belongs to uncultivated nature, but nothing of that which belongs to the grand." Of this singular criticism, the Catiline Conspiracy, and his Saul and Witch of Endor, afford the best refutation. His remarks on his landscape are more just. Between the subjects which he chose, and his manner of treating them, "every thing," says Sir

before the British public; and to such testimonies may be added, the hitherto unpublished opinion of one, from whose refined taste and superior judgment, few in the present day will be inclined to appeal—I mean the Baron Denon. In a letter to the author, this venerable Corypheus of the arts observes of Salvator, that he was "*grand compositeur, dessinateur spirituel, penseur poetique, grand paysagiste**, *et tout-à-fait original dans ce genre; vaste et grandiose en tout. Les arbres sur le devant ont une audace pour ainsi dire impertinente, qui leur donne de la noblesse,*" &c.

As an engraver, he had all the originality of manner which characterised his paintings; and

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Joshua, "was of a piece; rocks, trees, sky, even his handling have the same rude and wild character which animates his figures."—*Discourse*, vol. i. p. 133.

* Of his colouring, the Baron Denon observed (in reply to a question of the author's) "*Il est plus coloriste dans ses paysages que dans ses tableaux d'histoire; mais ces derniers sont plus profondement pensés.*"

notwithstanding the praises which have been lavished on the execution of his etchings, the designs or conceptions they embodied were still superior to the manual dexterity displayed: his touch was light, bold, and spirited; though he is accused of wanting the force and energy that characterised his pencil. He never engraved any pictures but his own*.

As a musical composer, his merits must be estimated by the progress which the most charming of all the arts had made in his own times. The music of Milton's modern Orpheus,

> "Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song
> First taught our English music how to span
> Words with just note and accent," &c.

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* The original plates, nearly worn out, were sold by the present family to the government for 1000 dollars, and are now in the Papal Chalcographic office. Copies were, however, piratically executed by a living artist, Rainaldi. Volpato, Strange, and Boydell, have engraved his principal pictures.

would, in the present day, be as little palatable to an English public, as the strains of Dante's favourite minstrel Casseli would be endurable to the *cognoscenti* audience of "the *San Carlos.*" It is enough to establish the musical genius of Salvator Rosa*, that his compositions were pronounced by the most learned and elegant musical professor of the last century, to be "in point of melody superior to

* While the air of "*Vado ben spesso,*" and others of Salvator Rosa's compositions are to be found in the elegant little musical albums of half the fashionables of London, with quadrilles by Queens, and waltzes by Duchesses, in Rome, all to whom I applied (either personally or through her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire, and my friend General Cockburn,) denied that Salvator ever had composed a bar: "they had never even heard he was a musician." They had probably never heard of the works of Baldinucci, Passeri, Pascoli, and other pictorial biographers, which are known and read every where, *but at Rome.* Two of Salvator's airs will be found at the end of this volume.

most of the masters of his time."* Of his skill in architecture (which, however, he never practised professionally), we have only a passing observation of Pascoli, who asserts, that "he understood it perfectly."

As a comic actor, an *improvvisatore*, a performer on many musical instruments, and (to use a French term for a talent, which for very obvious reasons has no fit English one) as a delightful *causeur*, the merits of Salvator Rosa must be taken upon trust! These brilliant qualifications which render life so much more easy and delectable, than higher talents and sublimer powers, have nothing to do with time—they belong to the moment, and are

* Of this, his beautiful air, preserved by Dr. Burney, of

"*Star vicino al bel' idol che l'ama,*

is a sufficient proof. Compared with the monotonous drone of Harry Lawes's celebrated love ditty,

"*A lover once I did espy,*

it is quite a modern melody; and yet Lawes and Salvator were contemporaries.

equally evanescent; but the testimony which all who witnessed these personal accomplishments of the great poet-painter bear to their excellence, endows him with a sort of individual and characteristic fascination, which perhaps, in the "hey-day of his life," he would not have exchanged for the immortality which awaited him, when such light and dazzling acquirements should be inevitably forgotten.

As a prose writer, (if his familiar letters written *à trait de plume* to intimate friends on intimate subjects, and never intended for publication, can entitle him to that epithet,) there is a something English and natural in his manner of expressing himself, which can only be estimated by those who are acquainted with the wretched prose style of that day in Italy, or by comparing his epistolary correspondence with the letters extant of Nicholas Poussin, Lanfranco, Domenichino, &c. In this, as in every other respect, Salvator Rosa had "*devancé son siècle.*"

His erudition was not only profound—it was cumbrous; and his teeming memory stands accountable for the pedantry which occasionally disfigures the best of his graver poems, at the moment that he attacks the same fault in others. He was accused by his detractors and critics of not knowing Greek. If this be true, (and it does not appear that it is) his modern readers will be rather thankful that he did not, from the over-use he has made of his acquirement in that dead language of which he was the master.

The more difficult and delicate task remains, to speak of Salvator as a poet; not, however, with reference to the language in which he wrote, to detect his Neapolitan *patois*, or lament that deficiency in "Tuscanisms," which drew, and still draws down upon him the anathemas of the Della Cruscan school. To attempt such an analysis would argue a presumption, only to be equalled by the bad taste which could lead to so flagrant a violation of literary discretion.

It is the poetical genius of Salvator Rosa, and the intellectual character of his poetry, with reference to the age in which he lived, and to contemporary writers, which alone can come with propriety under the discussion of one, who, as a foreigner, must be an inadequate judge of verbal merits and defects, but who may not be insensible to the force and originality of ideas which are admirable and original, in whatever language they are clothed.

To the political struggles of the sixteenth century in Italy—struggles which gave such an impetus to the national genius, and roused the intellectual energies of the people to their fullest possible developement, succeeded the utter subjection and dead repose which have ever hung upon the nations which have submitted to the House of Austria. From the early part of the seventeenth century, the liberty of speaking, of writing, almost of thinking, was controlled in Italy by the most fearful inflictions, civil and religious. The Inquisition became the tribunal where all literary merit

was adjudged; and the galleys or the scaffold awaited that daring genius, who, by the least freedom of inquiry, led to the discovery of those truths which it was the supposed interest of the Continental despots to bury in eternal oblivion. Even the priesthood no longer found safety in their habit, when they violated, by the faintest indiscretion of independent opinion, the settled order of things. The Spanish Viceroy of Naples tortured or persecuted such of the Italian clergy as adopted the Council of Trent, in opposition to the decrees which had issued from the Escurial. All public meetings were prohibited; all forbidden books found in the libraries of private individuals, subjected their owners to the most rigorous punishments, (and all books worth reading were then in the *Pope's Index Expurgatorius*). Throughout all Italy, the moral activity and intellectual force of the people were gradually, and by a fatal necessity, confined to the discussion of contemptible futilities, and devoted to a species of literary trifling, whose fatal influence

is still visible in those trivial productions and critical disputes, which, even now, are the sole products of the shackled press in that heavily oppressed country. In this epoch of debased intellect, the Cavaliere Marini, the Poet Laureat of blue-stocking Queens and rhyming Pontiffs, contributed by his vogue and influence to deteriorate all that remained of the pure taste and stern style which were conspicuous in the elegant versification of Lorenzo de' Medici, and in the nervous prose of Machiavelli.

The genius of Marini was so well suited to the age in which he flourished, that he became the model and authority for all the endless conceits and affected verbosity of the "*Rimatori Seicentisti**;" and the laboured pe-

* The boldness with which Salvator attacked the poetical mania and mannerism of the day, evinces a moral courage, infinitely more rare than mere animal hardihood. After declaring in his "Poesia" that he has so much to condemn that he scarcely dares begin, he suddenly bursts forth:—

"Offre

culiarities, forced metaphors, and wretched mannerisms, which his works brought into fashion, succeeded universally to those bold unfettered effusions of genius, which, in the immortal works of Ariosto and Tasso, had scared the puerile judgments of the incorporated academicians of Italy. Even England, under the Stuarts, caught the infection of Marini's manner; and Cowley, and other metaphysical poets of his time, imitated his false conceits and forced metaphors, and mistook his

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" Offre alla mente mia ristretto insieme
Un indistinto Caos vizi infiniti,
E di mille pazzie confuso il seme.
Quindi i traslati, e i paralelli arditi:
Le parole ampollose, e i detti oscuri,
Di grandezze e decoro i sensi usciti.
Quindi i concetti ò mal espressi, ò duri
Con il capo di bestia il busto umano,
Della lingua stroppiata i mori impuri
Dell' iperboli qui l'abuso insano,
Colà gl' inverisimili scoperti,
Lo stil per tutto effemminato, e vano," &c.

La Poesia.

subtlety for wit, and his hyperbole for sublimity. Deep thought and strong expression were now interdicted by political institutes; to write forcibly was to incur proscription; and a war of words, a contest upon accents, was waged with a species of vindictive fury, whose violence was the result of restless powers compressed within a narrow sphere, which painfully contrasted the natural activity of the Italian spirit with the nullity of the interests of the people.*

* Of the pastoral poetry and madrigals then in fashion in Italy, the following is a fair specimen. It is by Achillini, of whom Sismondi observes, "Few writers ever attained to so high a degree of reputation during their lives, and few have afterwards sunk into more complete oblivion. Italy, at that time, languished under the dominion of bad taste, whose influence over the mind and the imagination seemed to stifle every other species of talent." —P. 271, vol. ii. *of Roscoe's translation.*

"Col fior de' fiori in mano
Il mio Lesbin rimiro
Al fior respiro, e 'l pastorel sospiro.
Il fior sospira odori
Lesbin respira ardori.

L'od

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century the whole literary armament of Italy was drawn out in battle array, to defend a Sonnet of Marini, or to attack an Idyllium of Murtola, his rival; while the poetical imagination of the most imaginative people in Europe was restricted in all its conceptions within the pale of the heathen mythology, in whose worn-out combinations nothing could be found (as the Italian literary licence runs) "*contro la Santa fede Cattolica*," against the holy Catholic faith.

It is notable, therefore, that it was in the midst of this pitiable and self-satisfied mediocrity, this degraded and feeble state of the Italian intellect, that Salvator Rosa composed and recited his bold, vigorous, and poetical satires!—satires, which for the subjects they

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L'odor dell' uno odoro
L' ardor dell' altro adoro,
Ed odorando ed adorando i' sento
Dal odor, dal ardor, ghiaccia, e tormento."

treated, and the manner in which they were written, had the singular merit of originality, at a moment when that particular style of composition was supposed in Italy to have reached its supreme point of perfection; and when all originality, as Salvator himself declared, was wholly banished from the literature of the day.*

The Italian language had been early applied to satire, as many of the passages in the "Commedia" of Dante prove. But the vein of bitter invective of this poet, which spared neither Princes nor Popes, was succeeded by a light and jocose satire, which the talents and works of Lorenzo de' Medici, Franco †, Pulci, Berni,

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* "Tutti cantano omai le cose istesse;
Tutti di novità son privi affatto."
La Poesia—Satire di S. Rosa.

† "Nicola Franco fu impiccato in Roma in età senile per aver fatte una satira contro il S. Pontefice, Pio Quinto."
—*Nota alla Babilonia.*

Nicholas Franco was hanged at Rome in his old age, for having written a satire against Pius V. With him indeed, as with Juvenal, almost every line betrays the

and Bentivoglio, long continued to preserve fresh and unrivalled in popular admiration. The satires of Ariosto, with all their interest and merit, were merely personal: they recorded his own story, the blighting influence of patronage, the misery of literary dependence, the captious tyranny of pretending superiors, and the unwilling submission of proud but indigent genius! Great applause had been won by Baldovini for his "*Lamento di Cecco da Verlunga*," written in "*La lingua Contadinesca*," or rustic dialect; and Della Cruscan critics had crowned Menzini as the prince of Italian satirists, of the seventeenth century.

But these writers, though named satirists, scarcely ventured beyond jesting lightly with the lighter follies of mankind. They brought nothing of that deep feeling and philosophic spirit to bear upon their task, which distinguish the works of the painter-poet of Naples; and

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peculiar character of his inspiration.—*Facit indignatio versum.*

that poet was the first to attack the institutions of the corrupt society in which he lived, and to stigmatize the false conclusions and vicious modes they originated in all the relations of life. Indignant at the obstacles which mediocrity threw in the way of his own consciously-merited success, he scorned to palter with the littleness of the age in which he lived; but fell as recklessly on the crimes of the great, as on the pretension and servility of the tribe of painters and poets, who wrote or daubed down to the level of their ignorant and vain-glorious patrons.* Of a burn-

* In attacking the poetasters of the day, (which he did in some instances by name,) their servile habits and style of composition, he observes of himself, that neither the Muse nor the love of fame has induced him to write; but that he is irresistibly spurred on by the violation of all moral laws which he beholds on every side:—

"Non vedi tù, che tutto il mondo è pieno
Di questa razza inutile e molesta,
Che i poeti produr sembra il terreno?
Per Dio, Poeti, io vò sonare a Festa:
Me, non lusinga ambizion di gloria,
Violenza moral mi sprona e desta."

ing and energetic temperament, a true child of liberty, he was impracticable to all restraint. Writing rather from his passions than his head, he poured forth his verses in the abundance of his teeming ideas, not only regardless of the pedantic rules and academic refinements of his own particular age, but too frequently even negligent of that indispensable correctness of style and selection of phrase, which the best ages of literature in all countries have rigidly and properly exacted from the master-geniuses they have produced.* The satires of Salvator, resembling the poetry of Machiavelli more than that of any other Italian writer, are more remarkable for their depth of thought and vigour of expression, than for their grace or harmony:

* Salvator frankly and playfully alludes to this in his Poesia.

"Ed oggi *il Tosco mio guasto idioma*
Non havrà il suo Lucilio; oggi, ch' ascende
Ciascuno in Dirce a corônar la chioma."

but their author had one singular advantage over the political statesmen of Florence:—he did not coldly laugh at the human race, while he endeavoured to correct its follies by exposing them. He was too much in earnest to be playful, too vehement and atrabilarious not to wound sharply when he chose to strike. With more of Juvenal than Horace (though he imitated both) in the character of his genius, he occasionally displays, with the strength of the former, too much of his coarseness. But the prevailing manners of his day and country account for, without excusing, this unpardonable fault; which, though the least in the eyes of contemporary critics, must always lessen his merit in the estimation of a more refined and fastidious posterity. It is, however, notable, that if, like his great Latin prototype, he is sometimes offensive in terms, still he never falls into the immoral indelicacies of his influential countryman Marini, and is rarely guilty of those disgustingly coarse allusions to human depravity, with which

the great Censor-critic of England charges the "melancholy Cowley," the "courtly Denham," the "witty Donne," and other contemporary British poets, who were deemed the "*grace and ornament*" of an English court, and are still ranked among the brightest luminaries in the galaxy of British classics. Salvator, indeed, never for a moment relaxes from the highest tone of Christian and philosophical morality. His works, whether of the pen or the pencil, were all in alliance with Virtue and her cause; and he neither spares Ariosto nor Giulio Romano (whom he so much admired), when expressing his abhorrence of that perversion of genius, which lends its mighty powers to the corruption of society by pandering to its passions. The immediate precursor of Filicaja, he was the first who dared to write in the cause of liberty, and to expose the abuses in morals and manners which result from despotism in government; and this too, after a century of timid silence upon such perilous subjects, which, even

now to treat, would be to incur the horrors of an Italian dungeon, or an Hungarian fortress.*

Furnished to repletion by his retentive memory with a variety of classical allusions, which he used perhaps too unsparingly, his pages were at least free from that scholastic subtilty and far-fetched thought, which disfigured not only the conceited *Seicentisti* of Italy, but almost all the

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* His noble burst of indignation against the crimes of the great and the miseries of the lowly, in his poem of La Poesia, exhibits an almost superhuman courage, considering the age and circle in which he lived.†

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† " Dite di non saper qual più riceva
Seguaci, ò l'Alcorano, od il vangelo,
O la strada di Roma ò di Geneva.
Dite che della fede è spento il zelo
E che à prezzo d' un pan vender si vede
L' onor, La Liberta, l' anima, il cielo:
Che per tutto interesse ha posto il piede,
Che della Tartaria fino alla Betica
L' infame Tirannia post' hà la sede."

La Poesia.

poetry of contemporary writers in other countries; while in those allegorical personifications of which he was so fond, he displays all the poetical colouring and graphic touches which could be derived from the possession of an almost equal excellence in arts so closely allied.*

While the boldness and freedom with which he uttered opinions, always considered as heterodox in modern Italy, the courageous and uncompromising honesty with which he lashed at tyranny and hypocrisy, though surrounded by

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* Of this his description of Night in L'Invidia†, and his personification of the Genius of Painting and Envy, are fair illustrations.

† "Era la notte, e delle stelle i lussi
Cintia cingean che dal cornuto argento,
Sulla testa a più d' un scotea gl' influssi.
Tacea dell' aria il garrulo elemento,
Tacea dell' oceano il moto alterno
E soffiavan le spie, mà non il vento."

despots and inquisitors, evinced the highest tone of moral courage, his sarcasms levelled at the heartless egoism of the great, and at the absence of all public spirit in the people, may redeem those occasional faults and obvious excesses in style and expression, which were probably no less engendered by the opposition he had to contend with, than by the natural vehemence of his own passions and the unbridled wildness of his imagination.

But with his learning though it approached to pedantry, with his coarseness though it had verged on indecency, and with his exaggeration, though it had passed the line of all known hyperbole,—the Italian critics of the seventeenth century would have found no fault—for such blemishes were then deemed merits. The crime of Salvator Rosa—the splendid crime—was, that he had outstripped the age and nation in which he was condemned to live, by the frank expression of opinions which were then, as now, feared and condemned by all Italian

governments, and this offence still continues to keep his memory under the ban of legitimate proscription; while

" Gl' oziosi,
Gl' adormentati—i rozzi—e gl' umoristi
Gl' insensati—i fantastici, e gl' ombrosi *,"

of modern times, equally tenacious and uncompromising with their rulers, have not *yet* forgiven him his bitter attacks upon the tinsel taste and literary trifling of their forgotten predecessors †.

In despite, however, of literary and party feuds, of the opposition of the great and the attacks of the little, the poetical works of Sal-

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* Salvator Rosa—*Satira Seconda.*

† Salvator was, I believe, the first who attacked the Della Cruscan academy, for its infamous conduct to the immortal Tasso.

" Applaude ai Bavj, ai Mevj, arciasinoni,
Che non avendo letto altro che Dante,
Voglion far sopra i Tassi i Salomoni :
E con censura sciocca ed arrogante,
Al poema immortal del gran Torquato
Di contrapporre ardiscono il Morgante."—*Poesia.*

vator Rosa were read with avidity, and circulated universally, during his lifetime, and long before they were printed or published*. The brilliant success they met with from the impartial public served but to embitter the spirit of party against their author. When it was found no longer possible to decry the merits of his poems, his enemies denied they were his; and reports were industriously circulated that they were in part the compositions of Salvator Rosa's old and deceased friend, Fra Reginaldo Sgambati, and in part the works of Ricciardi. It was this calumny that produced his concluding satire *L'Invidia*, (one of his best and bitterest,) and induced his friends to come forward and prove the authenticity of those satires, which it was a perilous honour to father.

* The Satires, though circulated in manuscript, and universally read and admired throughout Italy, were not published till after Salvator's death, and then were dated from Amsterdam.

On this occasion, the Professor Ricciardi denied explicitly having any share in the composition of Salvator's poems; and Baldinucci produced scraps of the original MS. all blotted and corrected by Salvator's own hand. The two Maffei proved that the satires were compiled and finished in their own palace and villa at Volterra; and the celebrated Francesco Redi, (who, with a hundred others, had heard Salvator recite the Satires almost *al' improvviso,)* declared that he had also seen them in the progress of their transcription, and had pointed out the Neapolitanisms and faults of language to Salvator, which he reotified at the moment with such promptness, facility, and fine adaptation, as none but the author could have done.*

* While Salvator submitted to the criticisms of the elegant and amiable Redi, he laughed openly at the pedantic pretensions of the Della Cruscan *frekuquets.* "As for the ancients," he says, "I adore their memory, and kiss the trace of their steps;" but for the Della Cruscan purists,

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Still, however, with all these honourable testimonies in their favour, the internal evidence of the poems themselves is the best proof of the identity of their author. "In fact," says a modern Italian critic, "Salvator, in his Satires, has given a striking portrait of himself: they contain the same vivacious sallies and acute *bon-mots*, which came out through all his comic recitations, his familiar letters (written to his friends), and his original conversation; and which obtained for him the esteem and affection of all the most accomplished persons of Rome and Florence.

"Di barbarie servile e pedantesca
La di lor poesia cotanto è carca,
Ch' è assai più dolce una canzon Tedesca.
Mà qui il mio ciglio molto più s' inarca:
Non è con loro alcuna voce Etrusca,
Se non è nel Boccaccio ò nel Petrarca;
E mentre vanno di parlare in busca
I Toscani Mugnai Legislatori
Gli *trattano da Porci* con la *Crusca*."—*La Poesia.*

While the professed *Trecentisti* and Della Cruscans of the present day * place Salvator Rosa in the second class of poets—while his works are anathematized by the "*Parnasso Italiano*," and "damned with faint praise" by those cold dry literary annalists, Tiraboschi and Crescimbeni †, there are even among those of

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* Life prefixed to the Satires of Salvator Rosa.

† Crescimbeni's observations on Salvator Rosa are worth quoting, as curious specimens of the Italian prose style of his day:

"Salvatore Rosa, Pittore, non poco accredito, fu anche poeta satirico, e fiorì spezialmente nel Pontificato di Clemento IX. Un volume di sue Satire fu impresso dopo sua morte, che seguì in Roma, e fu sepolito in Santa Maria degli Angeli," &c.

"S. Rosa, a painter of no small renown, was also a satirical poet, and flourished *more especially* in the reign of Clement IX. A volume of his Satires was published after his death, which happened at Rome, and was buried (the volume?) in the Santa Maria," &c.

This perspicuous prose writer appears enraged at the encomiums bestowed on Salvator, in his epitaph by the

the modern Italians, whose own principles are in full coincidence with the political opinions and philosophical views of Salvator Rosa, many who shrink from opposing their own private judgment in favour of the poet of liberty, to the decision of those authorized and "time-honoured" tribunals which condemned Torquato Tasso. But Italy is daily becoming more worthy of appreciating the genius of one, whom England has always cherished;

General of the Jesuits, who, he says, speaks of Salvator's poetical merits, "*con iperboli incredibilemente strabicchevali.*"—*Istoria della Volgar Poesia*, &c.

It is curious that Tiraboschi only alludes to Rosa incidentally, in his eulogy on Benedetto Menzini (the protegé of Queen Christina of Sweden). "Nel satire Italiane egli (Menzini) non ha chi gli possa star à confronto, e solo ad esse si accostano quelle di Ludovico Adimari, da noi nominato poi anzi, e più di lungo quelle di Salvator Rosa poeta e pittore Napolitano, e più celebre per la pittura che per la poesia."

nor can it be supposed, that they who now dare to admire the nervous strength and free breathings of an Alfieri—who dwell with enthusiasm on the bold, imaginative, and philosophical poetry of a Byron (of all modern English poets the one most read in Italy),—could remain insensible to the same quality of genius in a native poet, though marked by less polished forms, and draped in less modern modes. The fact is so much the contrary, that the Satires of Salvator Rosa are daily becoming more read and admired throughout Italy. His political opinions, his philosophy, his taste, all belong to the present times, as they were splendid exceptions to the tameness, ignorance, and literary degradation of those in which he flourished: and did he now live to illustrate Italy and her troubled dawn of regeneration with his powerful and brilliant talents, it may be presumed that the cause which led him to abandon the painted galleries of Rome for the murky tower of Masaniello, would still have

directed his pencil and guided his pen in favour of that liberty which, like a pure and persecuted religion, has been miraculously preserved by some few warm and zealous worshippers, even in a region, where every institute has long been, and still is, armed against its existence.

CHAPTER XII.

Letters of Salvator Rosa to Doctor Baptista Ricciardi*, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Pisa, from the year 1652, to the year 1669.

LETTER I.

IT is clear that you labour under some malady of the eyes, by the judgment you have passed on the picture. Poor Albano! While he flattered himself that he had arrived at the last perfection of his art, Ricciardi pronounces of his picture, "*that he never saw a worse.*" Go then, Rosa, and exchange with Ricciardi, one of your

* Reader on Moral Philosophy in the University of Pisa, and in his time a poet of some celebrity. Rosa had exchanged a landscape done by himself for Ricciardi, against a picture of Albano's, which forms the subject of this letter.

little landscapes for the picture of a man so famous in his art; and since Ricciardi is neither a professor of painting nor even the most clear-sighted of judges, you may hope that he will not only not be displeased, but be actually satisfied with his bargain. I must, however, be on my guard; since my most sapient and refined Metrodorus is so much more knowing than I am. That the three butterflies, however, should not please, is too much criticism, and quite beyond my comprehension; so e'en let us drop the subject. I give up in every thing and for ever to your taste, since I find it so wide from the opinion which the whole world has long entertained of Albano; and I promise you, that another time I shall avoid the error of which you complain, and think a little better of my own works for the future.

I must now inform you, that I have sold my two great pictures to the Venetian ambassador, a nobleman of extraordinary judgment. When he came to see me, he took so much pains to express his esteem by other means than the

mere common-place jargon of such great personages, that he compelled me to sell him the pictures at the first offer which he made me, through one of his gentlemen, an acquaintance of my own. The price is three hundred ducats, which, though less than the value of the labour, will answer my purpose well enough.

I beg, therefore, that should you stand in need of such a sum, you will make use of it as frankly and liberally as I offer it. I have often told you that I have nothing in the world that I would not willingly share with you; and if you do not now accept my offer, I shall think you take all this for mere profession. Ricciardi, he who has given you all his affections and his esteem should not withhold his purse.

If you send me the Canzone, I shall esteem it as the fruit of your genius; but I must frankly tell you, that when I saw it dedicated to Cascina *, I was ready to faint. Cascina

* Rosa complains that Ricciardi, after dedicating a canzonetta to him, should put Cascina's name at the head of another.

was never made to be sung among the Volunni, the Baldinelli, and the Salvator Rosa's. You will understand me.

The heats are beginning to set in with great violence; and I must confess myself an ass for spending the summer at Rome. But the fault is yours; and whatever happens of it, you shall be made responsible for all, in good time.

Salute all our friends; and do me the favour of telling Signor Lanfreducci, that I have executed his commission and got the two airs copied; but his friend must call for them as we had agreed, for he lives at three miles distance from me. For the rest I know of nothing that will be more gracious to hear, than that you are in good health. Signora Lucrezia and Ursula embrace you conjointly with

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

July 6, 1652.

LETTER II.

My letter of last week was but short; and so they must all be that I shall write during the month of September, owing to the business I am about to relate to you. Signor Corsini has been appointed the French Nuncio, and after having considered what present he could make to the king on his arrival in France, he resolved last week that I should paint a great battle-piece *, exactly of the size of my

* This is the unrivalled Battle-piece now in the Royal Museum of France. It is curious to observe, that the diplomatic presents of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries chiefly consisted in the works of the great masters, as they now do in diamond snuff-boxes and costly toys. The favourable result to the arts is obvious, as well as the estimation in which good pictures were held. "In December, the Queen (of Charles I.) was brought to bed of a second daughter, named Elizabeth. To congratulate her Majesty's safe delivery, the

" Bacchanals," with which you are acquainted; —that is to say, it must be fourteen palms in length and nine in width. For all this, I have but forty days allowed me, since Monsignor must leave Rome by the end of September; and knowing that no other painter here could have executed a work in so short a time, or applied himself to business during the heats of August, he has shut his eyes to the two hundred ducats, which I have asked as the lowest price: and I on the other hand have joyfully embraced the occasion, not only on account of the liberal price, but for the honour (which could not well have been greater), of sending one of my pictures from Rome as a present to the King of France!

But this is not all: Monsignor Gaetano,

Hollanders sent hither a solemn embassy and a noble present—a large piece of ambergris, two fair china-basons, almost transparent; a curious clock, and four rare pieces of Tintoret's and Titian's painting."—*Whitelock*, p. 24.

who is chosen the Spanish Nuncio, would also have given me five hundred scudi for my two pictures of the *Philosophers*, to carry them to the King of Spain, had they now been in my possession.* What say you to this, friend? Am I not in the right road to glory? Is not my reputation and esteem among artists on the increase? I must, however, beg your indulgence, if in the mean time I write with unusual brevity; for, in truth, my head is now as full of slaughter and uproar as if it belonged to Alecto herself.

Oh! how deeply the news of your brother's extravagance affected me. He was a man to whom I could have confessed my sins upon my knees. The worst too of the business is, that what he has done falls on your patrimony; a circumstance which I feel in my inmost heart. I hope, however, that you will not be greatly distressed: but, at all events, I

* These are, I believe, the two pictures in the possession of the Marchioness Dowager of Lansdown.

am here to assist you; and I swear to you, that as long as I have a Giulio, the half of it shall be yours. Cheer up, therefore, and smile misfortune out of countenance. At present I am richer than all the Crœsuses and the Cæcilii together, and let that suffice, since I am yours heart and soul.

I repeat that you are wrong in supposing that the little oval picture is not by Albano, but by some Roman artist. It is most certainly his, though one of the last things he did, and executed under the disadvantage of old age; so you must have patience. If it has not indeed all the *gusto* I could wish, I am sure of this, that there is no one in this country who could do better. But, as I do not care to dispute with you at present on pictures, I suppose I must e'en make my account by painting you something of my own, and taking this one back again; will this please you, Signor Coccia?

As to the battle-piece of three and a half *braccie* by two, on which you desire that I

should put a price, I shall give you my opinion as usual with perfect freedom. You know, I believe, my repugnance to the subject. It is one on which I have set my heart to excel all the painters who may desire to enter the lists with me, to say nothing of the great labour of such a work. If you choose, however, you may tell your friend, that out of friendship for you, it shall cost him but three hundred crowns: and I must tell you moreover, that, except at your suggestion, I would not undertake it at any price. You already know that I have almost made a vow not to paint any more such pictures, unless they are paid for at the rate of a Titian or a Raffael!

Father Cavalli* (who was with me yesterday) esteems you much: he is, in truth, a most worthy personage.

For the rest, dear Ricciardi, keep up your spirits, and believe in purse and person I am wholly yours.

* Ricciardi dedicated a canzone to P. Cavalli.

The Signora Lucrezia and Ursula salute you, as I do most affectionately all our friends. I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Tell me how Sign. Lanfreducci liked "*Il Sonno.*"

August, 1652.

LETTER III.

This post brought no letter from you, which I am willing to attribute to some extraordinary occupation on your part. My picture sets off for France to-morrow, where I have only to hope it will succeed as well as it has done in Rome, which I may swear to you is as much as any modern picture (not to speak of the old masters) ever did; insomuch, that my reputation has taken an amazing spring.

The book you ask for is not to be found; but our friend Signor Brunetti has already told you as much. At last, Ricciardi, I may say that I am restored to my ancient freedom. I have hitherto not had a day free from visitors since I finished my precious picture.

Remember me to our friend Signor Fabretti, and recall me to his good wishes, as also to those of the rest of your circle. Meanwhile, from my solitude, I remind you to write as often as you can, and to love me while you live. I embrace you affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 19th October, 1652.

LETTER IV.

DEAR FRIEND,

Your advice ever was, and ever will be, most welcome to me. With respect to my

scraping together a little money, as well for the dignity of my reputation, as for the comforts of life, I must needs confess, that without money it is impossible that we artists can derive all the benefit from our labours that we seek and that we deserve; and I have resolved to use all possible diligence on my part, whenever Fortune is disposed to do her's. My picture is on its road to France, having met with all the success of which I have informed you. But tell me, could it have gone at a worse moment than the present, when the King has any thing else in his head rather than pictures?

Well, these are pleasant speculations; not to speak of a thousand other teazing trifles respecting the price, which however are no trifles in their influence on my interests. Still I leave all to heaven: as far as I am concerned I must be a gainer, if not in pecuniary matters, at least in reputation. Before this time you must have received a letter from me, in which I have explained my reasons respecting

a journey to Naples in the ensuing Lent. I do not send you the sketches of the Battle-piece, as it is necessary that I should keep them myself, to avoid repetitions on a future occasion. But if it is true that you are going on with your collection of designs, I must send you some trifle.

The Signora Lucrezia is near her confinement, and suffers much as usual. Both she and Ursula kiss your hands.

The Archdeacon is gone to the other world; heaven grant him there more brains, than he seemed to have in this world! I salute all friends, and embrace Signor Fabretti most affectionately, assuring you of my love.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, October 16, 1652.

A letter from Sig. Cespini * has appeared here extremely clever; and as it is full of my praises, pray thank him for it in my name.

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* A Knight of San Stephano, and Professor of Law at Pisa.

LETTER V.

Gracious heaven! I can scarcely believe that the letter received by this post is yours, after the six posts that have come in without bringing me any such welcome favour, or even the accustomed substitute of a letter from Signor Cosimo. The curses I have bestowed upon dame Comedy * have been most tremendous, since it is she that has occasioned me this long fast. I have, however, had some revenge; since her tediousness has made her not a little tiresome. This defect I learned, before your letter, from the accounts given me by the Canonico da Scornio, my neighbour and an excellent gentleman. I wrote you lately a very long letter under the usual cover of Signor Fabretti, giving you a full account of my misfortunes,

* Ricciardi wrote several comedies, replete with much humour.

and of every thing that has happened in the interval of your silence. Pray write to me, and let me know if my letter has arrived safe, and save me the annoyance of supposing it has fallen into other hands.

You will have heard of the horrible infamies of my enemies, who, under pretext of answering the Satires, have played the spy upon my privacy; but He who saw their intentions, and is truth itself, has turned things differently from their expectation; and so far so good. If the letter has not already got into your hands, use all diligence to recover it.

But to return to ourselves: imagine your friend all bile, spirit, and fire, as he is, suffering such indignities!! However, I must still strive to wear the mask of contempt and of patience, by considering that their fire is of straw, and that mine is asbestos.

My obligations to Signor Camillo Rubiera are great indeed: he is a gentleman of consummate worth; and I grieve, on such occasions,

that my fortune is not equal to my spirit, but I must have patience, for I can now do no better; and only rest in the hope, that through the liberality of my friends I may be able to repay such benefits. Great God! what experience has not my adversity afforded me, in discovering the attachment of some, whose souls I little dreamed harboured so much benevolence and tenderness, and from whom I have reaped miracles of kindness. On the other hand, some there are whose swords I doubted not would have flown from their scabbards in my defence, yet who, when I put them to the proof, were silent as mutes. Pray heaven I may be able to profit in the future by the lessons thus taught in misfortune. But as God lives, I must for ever say, that a more affectionate heart than thine does not beat.

With respect to the designs for your scenes, I will take care of you.* The wood pieces espe-

* If those were scenes for Ricciardi's private theatre, how precious they would now be.

cially I will do myself: for the rest, I hope you will be contented, as I have this morning engaged a famous Milanese perspective painter to do them. The landscape you might have next week, but we must wait the leisure of the other good man, that all may go together. Tell me if you go to Florence this summer, which I should think a pleasanter abode than Pisa.

The Padre Cavalli has been here; and, after much conversation, he told me, that "he knows no one who is more my well-wisher than Ricciardi, who speaks of me with infinite affection." Judge what pleasure I receive on such an attestation? You will hear from Signor Cordini the wishes of Signor Volunnio, who urges me to print, but who desires first to hear the whole of my Satires read. Imagine to what a length the kindness of an advocate, a friend of mine extends! He wishes to get my cause before the Rota, in order, as he says, to immortalize himself by so singular a case. I have,

however, dissuaded him from the enterprise, and prevailed on him not to speak on the subject. In truth he is an excellent person, and in the high road to pre-eminence in that court: his name is l'Avocato Serroni, my most devoted friend.

You do not send me the idea for a picture, though I have asked it more than once. Do not, I beg of you, fail me; as I must have something ready for the ensuing festival.

I was exceedingly desirous that you should have Gheradelli's tragedy, and that you should agree with all the world in admiring the defence, even more than the work itself. It is really worthy of a great man. Have you remarked my design for the frontispiece, to which I did not choose to put my name? That infamous Schierabandolo is now saying, that he will print against the defence, in the teeth of that reverence which all men pay to the dead. With this, and many affectionate remembrances, I remain wholly yours, praying you to salute our

friends. Signora Lucrezia and Ursula do the same by you.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, May —, 1654.

LETTER VI.

I am happy to learn that you are in Florence, and that you are enjoying the society of the most friendly of all beings, the Signor Cordini, whose conversation cannot fail to be a great comfort to you. Let me know if you mean to spend the summer there; and if Signor Cosimo is with you.

On my own affairs I shall not say a word. It is sufficient to tell you, that peace has been utterly banished from my mind on account of those same blessed Satires, which, ere I had commenced, I wish I had broken

my neck. Every thing continues to make me miserable, in spite of all the prudence and virtue in the world. Two, however, of my enemies have this week foresworn their persecution on hearing my last composition.*

I am surprised that you do not mention a visit you received at Pisa, from a certain Canonico Perruca†, a relation of Scornio's; for I know that he talks much of me and of my Satires, and that on his return to Rome there was much questioning of him, (when it was known that he came from Pisa,) concerning your talents, manner of composition, &c.

In one word, if I do not now die of despair, no man that ever lived, did so !‡

The designs for the scenes you shall have immediately—I mean for those which I was to make: I wait only till the perspective scene is finished, which I shall have this week from

* "L'Invidia." † A Canon of Pisa.

‡ In allusion to the persecutions he was undergoing on account of his Satires.

the hands of the best artist in that line. By the next post I will send every thing together. If I alone had been concerned in this affair, it should have been done long ago.

I do not mean to force or to persuade you in the business of Volterra: it is my duty to obey your wishes, and to seek only your satisfaction; and this I promise that I will do. I am waiting with great anxiety for your idea for the picture; but I am aware that I have already written to you frequently on this subject.

I will copy the Capitolo of Metosi* on the back of this letter to obey you. Pray let me know how long you intend to stay in Florence? I think on the score of health you had better spend the summer there than in Pisa. Give me some intelligence of Signor Giulio, as I cannot get an answer to any of my letters to him: I know not, indeed, whether he be alive or dead.

* A humorous poet.

For the rest, I commend myself to you; assuring you that my greatest consolation lies in the reflection that I enjoy your friendship. Commend me, &c. &c.; I kiss your hand.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, June 13, 1654.

LETTER VII.

How you have set my mouth watering with the account of your visit to Carfagnana, and your enjoyment of the wood scenery of that country, so congenial to my nature! I swear to you, that I have not known happiness since I passed Monte Rufoli and Barbajana; and yet these are nothing to the country of which you speak. In short, I never think of it without sadness, which is a proof that it afforded no ordinary occupation of mind, and health to the body. But let us turn to another subject: the very

thought of this affects me even to tears. As to the little villa you offer me, I agree with you that it is a great prerogative to be master of a spot of one's own; but then the vicinity of this to other habitations, spoils its beauty in my eyes, and the want of wood alone is sufficient to render every place imperfect in my estimation.

How grieved I am for the misfortunes of Signor Leoli! I feel in my heart for his affliction: I beg you will make my compliments to him and to the rest of your amiable circle. I shall say nothing of the Canonico: it is sufficient for me that Bertoldino alone is in the comedy, and plays him such tricks, that they say he is determined either to return home or to go to France. If Signor Lancia has the same success in parts of this description, I shall be made up for the festivals.* For some weeks past I have

* It appears from this, that Salvator was still a dramatic amateur, and occasionally performed in the private theatricals at Rome during the Carnival.

been amusing myself with etching in aqua-fortis. In good time you shall see the results; but it has not been my good fortune to reserve this employment for the solitudes of Strozzavolpe, as I had intended. I shall keep other things, however, in store to work on when the dove shall return to its resting-place.* In the mean while, remember that years are advancing, and that many disasters, which can be cheerfully supported in youth, are not so easily endured in age. I do not say this to urge you; since I would fain believe that you have the same inclination that I have to avoid my losing altogether the little hope which remains to me in these matters. Compliments to Signor Cosimo and to your sister for me, and from the Signora Lucrezia. I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, November 20, 1660.

* An allusion to his meditated visit to his favourite Strozzavolpe.

LETTER VIII.

Before I commence this letter I have consigned the packet to the courier for Florence, directed to the care of Signor Simon Torrigiani, in the post-office at Florence, for Signor Giov. Battista Ricciardi at Pisa: with the little picture you will find the sketch of Polycrates in two pieces, which was designed at Strozzavolpe,—that of Alexander with Diogenes, Philolaus, and two others, (that is to say, one of Democritus, which is imperfect, and its companion Diogenes parting with his Cup,*)—all excellently done, in the same manner as you directed.

With respect to your two pictures, your account of the place they are to occupy happens to be most opportune. As to that which you desire for your friend, the painters who do flowers moderately well are gone to Turin.

* These are designs for etchings by Rosa.

There are some here who work better, but their prices are too high for this meridian; and with such gentry I will have nothing to do.

As to landscapes and animals, here is nothing that pleases me—I mean on the score of price, although there are enough to surfeit you.

I am sorry your house does not answer, and that you are obliged to inhabit the attic. This will force you to repair the roof, before you commence what you have proposed.

I am delighted that you were never more free from your defluxion. I trust in Christ that it will disappear altogether, and leave you quite well. The remedy of not applying to study is the true panacea after all, the only means of preserving yourself; so pray keep to it. Don't forget to embrace Signor Cosimo in my name, and to present compliments to all in your house; and remember me gratefully to all your friends. Farfanicchio*, Signora

* A *nom de caresse* bestowed by him on his little son Agosto, who was now nine years old.

Lucrezia, and myself, all kiss your hands affectionately. Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 11th March, 1662.

LETTER IX.

I could not give you any account of my return from Loretto till this day. I arrived here on the sixth of May. I was for fifteen days in perpetual motion! The journey was beyond all description curious and picturesque; much more so than is the route from hence to Florence. There is a strange mixture of savage wildness and of domestic scenery, of plain and precipice, such as the eye delights to wander over. I can safely swear to you, that the tints of these mountains by far exceed all I have ever observed under your Tuscan skies; and as for your

Verucola, which I once thought a dreary desert, I shall henceforth deem it a fair garden, in comparison with the scenes I have now explored in these Alpine solitudes. O God! how often have I sighed to possess, how often since called to mind, those solitary hermitages which I passed on my way!—How often wished that fortune had reserved for me such a destiny! I went by Ancona and Sorolo, and on my return visited Assisa; all sites of extraordinary interest to the genius of painting. I saw at Terni (four miles out of the high road) the famous waterfall of the Velino; an object to satisfy the boldest imagination, by its terrific beauty. A river dashing down a mountainous precipice of nearly a mile in height, and then flinging up its foam to nearly an equal altitude! Believe, that while on this spot I moved not, saw not, without bearing you full in my memory and mind!

Send me an account of your health, and of all that concerns you; and forget not to em-

brace Signor Cosimo, and to make my remembrances to all, even to the very cats! A hundred, nay, a thousand salutations to our friends. With every good wish, I embrace you affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 13th May, 1662.

LETTER X.

I received your second envelope, which I forwarded like the other, but without having the good fortune to consign it to Signor Conti's own hands, whom I have never been able to see. As you say, nothing will be done to the purpose, unless by means of money. In this, however, I am not to blame; for I have told him I was ready to disburse whatever sum he demanded.

Some days ago, a certain priest called on me,

and told me he had ten scudi to pay me, which, I suppose, is the money which you informed me Signor Marcantonio had remitted to Rome for this affair. I refused to take them, telling him, that when the money was demanded of me, I would then take it from him; and so there the thing rests. To tell you the truth, I do not like this business being in the hands of Brigritti: he is a bad subject, and of a bad reputation. But since Signor Conti, whom you esteem, has chosen him, I shall say nothing about it; more especially, as I am in these matters a very Bertoldino, and abhor the name of a lawsuit.

I have finished the two pictures on which I was employed: the subjects are spick and span new and untouched, covering a canvass of eight palms in length. I have painted Pythagoras on the sea-shore, followed by his sect, in the act of redeeming a net of fish, which the fishermen are drawing to the shore, in order to restore them to their liberty:—the story is from

Plutarch. The other is the same personage, who, after having passed a year in a subterranean abode, returns to a crowd of men and women of his own sect, who are waiting his arrival, and tells them he has been in Hell, where he has seen the ghosts of Homer and Hesiod, and a thousand other follies suited to the credulity of the times. These works I have executed, in order to their exhibition at the festival of San Giovanni Decollato. I will not fail to inform you of their success.

If in your reading you meet with any such subjects, pray note them, for they have great success. For the rest, I salute Signor Cosimo and his wife, with all the family; more especially my friend Salvatorino*; for myself, for Signora Lucrezia, and for Farfanicchio.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 29th July, 1662.

* His godson.

LETTER XI.

It is wholly superfluous to remind me of my last year's residence at Strozzavolpe. There passes not a day of my life in which my heart fails to celebrate in solemn commemoration even the most trifling incident that occurred there, and with no faint anguish, from the contrast of my present situation. The minutest particulars are recorded only to torment me; and I often chide Augustus, who remembers every thing, for embittering my memory by reviving its impressions, especially in the present month, which was last year so pregnant with enjoyment.—But let us talk of something else. The festival of San Giovanni was, on many accounts, most solemnly observed. The task of preparation fell upon the house of Sacchetti, and the distribution of the pictures consequently on Pietro da Cortona, who is their *dependent*. There were exposed a vast many old pic-

tures, as these noblemen got the flower of the most celebrated Roman galleries on the occasion. Besides my two pictures of Pythagoras, I had another larger one of "*Jeremiah*," who being thrown into prison by the king of Judah for predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, was restored to liberty at the prayer of the eunuch Ebedmelech. There were in it thirteen figures, as large as life. There were also two other pictures; of which, as they were not painted for this exhibition, I shall say nothing. And so much for the festival of San Giovanni!

I have lately read the life of Apollonius, written by Philostratus, with very great pleasure, from its singularity; but I have not found in it that sort of stuff, that imagery, which would paint well, and of which you spoke:—for this there should be some concentrated point of action. Pray, therefore, recommend me something else, in which I may find some incident out of the common, something which I may employ to the purpose.

Of the *Pasticcio* I remember nothing; but, as you think it may succeed, I have nothing more to say. If it will bear the expense of coming and going, and you are contented, so am I.

Of the news of the day, I have not a word to tell you: that which is of public import, you already know by public report.

Respecting Signor Marcantonio's lawsuit, I do not know what has been done; for since I have paid Signor Conti the four scudi, I have seen nothing of him; and I, as all the world knows, never leave the Monte-di-Trinità. I go into town only when it is indispensably necessary.

The engravings are admired and much sought after, and are getting abroad into all parts. I have two great copper-plates prepared; but cannot bring myself to begin them, from the recollection of the labour bestowed on those of last year.

Heaven knows how I grieved for the loss of

the boy*, both on account of Signor Cosimo's affliction and his wife's: but I comfort myself that the model is still vigorous—"Oh, blessed are they who," &c. &c. &c.

Do not fail in writing to Signor Giacomo and to Signor Minucci†, to salute them in my name, as well as to all our respected friends.

I come back once more to my request, that you will be diligent in seeking some good subject for a picture in the course of your readings. The Signora Lucrezia, Augusta, and myself, all kiss your hands affectionately.

Salutation to all your family.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 16th September, 1662.

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* Rosalvino, his godson, before alluded to.

† Paolo Minucci wrote a comment on the Malmantile and was Salvator's host, during the pleasant visit to Florence, so often recorded.

LETTER XII.

I write but four lines, to give you some tidings of myself, and to throw you into utter confusion for your total neglect of giving me your own, which, you know, is what I most desire in life.

I had great pleasure in learning that Brunetti has been with you, and that he satisfied in part your curiosity.

At the feast of St. John this year, I have exposed my great picture, (the figures as large as life,) taken from the history of the Catilinarian Conspiracy*, and done literally from the description of Sallust. It was excessively admired by the judges. I share my triumphs with you, as one should do with such a friend as you are! For the rest, send me news of

* This picture, so long the principal treasure of the Casa Mentelli, is now in the Pitti palace of Florence.

your health; and believe, that nothing lives more warmly in my memory than the consciousness of your affection. God preserve you! Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, 8th September, 1663.

LETTER XIII.

I am steeped deep in amazement, that such a mind as your's should have left it till this day to discover the worth and the temper of Salvator Rosa on the subject of friendship. But if all is not a jest, I must believe that the freedom with which you attack me proceeds from no other source, than that you consider me under particular obligations to you. If this *were* so, I should still only endure such freedom to the extent of what might be justifiable. I beg to remind you, that neither you nor I are gods; that you are but a man (a great man,

indeed, in my estimation); but that I do not choose to be regarded as a mere nonentity* in the estimation of others.

So then, for having told you that I would not put more than twoor three figures in your picture, you think it worth while to make this uproar—this foolish and imprudent quarrel? But to clear myself of an imputed fault, of which I could never have be enguilty:—"*Chiano, chiano*†," as the Neapolitans say. Now, supposing that, instead of two or three figures, I had restricted myself to *one*, I should have thought, Ricciardi, that even that one, coming from my hand, might have contented you, and have had sufficient merit to be a companion not only to your *ridiculous Bambocciato*, but ('fore God) even for the finest picture of the first-rate painter of the day. I confess that I do not understand your cabals,

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* The term in the original is *Cetrivolo*, which has in Neapolitan idiom a signification which would not literally translate to answer the sense.

† Piano, piano! "softly, softly!"

nor conceive what more you could expect than simply a picture of my painting; and in this, if I am to blame, as you declare, you should not have begged the execution of one in three several letters, as you know very well was the case.

But since my destiny forces me to enter into apologetic explanations with *you*, (which I never could have imagined), I must tell you, that for some time back I have felt a great exhaustion and lassitude in painting, and that to avoid a total disgust to the art, I choose only facile subjects, which do not keep me long at the easel, and that I seldom exceed the number of figures I stipulated for with you; if in this, you choose to use your ordinary mode of interpretation, and to attribute all to my extreme fault, you must give me leave to abate something of the opinion I have hitherto entertained of your high-mindedness. Observe me, Ricciardi: if our contest were confined to mere questions of literature, I would most readily be brought to yield to you; but when it comes to your treat-

ing me as an ingrate, as a man of narrow and calculating spirit, I shall shew my teeth—if not to bite, at least to defend myself; and it will be no difficult matter to prove the falsity of your accusation, since I am sufficiently known, if not to you, at least to the rest of the world.

I confess, that since we have known each other, you never so much displeased me as in this instance; and I never could have imagined that such a friend as I have deemed you, could have offended me in a point on which I am confident I deserve infinite praise.

To a painter of my class and unfettered genius, (the size of a picture excepted) every thing should be left at liberty, (and so I should have acted by you in such a contingency); not presuming to teach the initiated, but consulting in every thing the genius of the painter, and believing confidently that any trifle from a classical hand is worth the consideration of a connoisseur. Must I remind you, that a single

verse of Homer is worth a whole poem of Chœrilus! For the present I have done, that I may not excite your wrath, as you have roused mine. Great God! did ever man behold a more egregious piece of folly than this, to judge of a painter and a friend, by the number of figures he puts in a picture!

Reserve, reserve, I beseech you, my friend, these cavilling punctilios for your criticisms on my poetry, and not for my heart, which, with respect to you at least, is without sin; and if you are angry at this letter, as it affords a specimen of sovereign indignation and freedom of spirit, I must only promise you for the future to flatter you in your absurdities up to your bent.

I salute all the family, and embrace you with all my soul,

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, June 6, 1664.

LETTER XIV.

You are very simple to believe that I have applied myself to amassing money, especially in the present times, when every good Christian turns his money often in his pocket before he parts with it. He who has crammed you with this tale either wishes me well, or dreams that I am so. For the first, I thank him; and for the second, I am sorry it is not true. All my riches, my dear Ricciardi, amount to three or four coin, laid by in cotton. Seriously, business is entirely laid aside, owing to the rumours of a war; and, consequently, all my little emoluments, which were drawn from it, are stopped for the present. It is true, I have to the value of a thousand scudi in pictures finished, of which I can sell one now and then with great difficulty. As for commissions, there is not even a dog to order a picture; if the war goes on, I

may even plant my pencil in my garden! and this is all my secret of money-making, at your service! However, let those believe me wealthy who will. I go on spoiling a little paper, merely to keep my purse alive; and even on these engravings I am obliged to pay the new tax. My dear friend, all riches should be placed in the mind, and in being contented to sip where others revel in prosperity. If I could sell all my pictures, I would laugh at Crœsus; but this will take time.

I am sorry for your bad vintage: in this, your quality of poet is against you.

Farfanicchio salutes you, and talks of you incessantly; and there is nothing so often repeated at our fireside in this season as your name. I beg of you all to love me, and to believe, what I must always repeat, that I have not any thing more at heart than your welfare, and so I kiss your hands.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, Jan. 2, 1664 (5 ?)

LETTER XV.

You are right to put me in mind, when I have need of a remembrancer. I wholly forgot the drawing of *Philolaus* when I was packing up the others, and even had it before my eyes at the time! Pity me; I was half out of my wits on another subject—you shall hear of it another time.

To satisfy you respecting the "*pinxit*" affixed to my engravings, I have done so out of courtesy, and to make it believed, that as I engraved, so I coloured. But the truth is, that from *Attilius* in the great, and Demosthenes and Diogenes *della Scodella* of the middle-sized pieces, none others were coloured by me, and even those were done in whim, (as the Giants for instance) merely to show what the colouring was. But on this subject I should have to write you a bible—not *an holy bible*, but a most heterodox one! I do not, however, know that

I have acted from the generosity of my soul: I rather think it is my infernal pride. Oh! how much are we obliged to those same Stoics, for having taught us the most efficacious remedy for all human sufferings!

The dedications, Latin and Italian, can be of little use; but I will try to satisfy you.

I sent you by last post the licence you asked for: I hope it will arrive safe. Your manner of speaking of the Valteline (would that I were with you!) has filled me with low spirits, by bringing to my mind the divine solitudes of *Strozzavolpe!* How I hate the sight of every place that is inhabited!

For the relief of my mind, I am meditating a journey. If I am able to realize this scheme, I will tell you; if not, it will vanish with my other castles in the air.

For the rest, command me; and believe that I hold nothing dearer or more precious to my memory and heart than your friendship, and the devotion I owe to my Lucrezia, who, with

Augustus, salutes you, as I embrace you most affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Oct. 11, 1665.

LETTER XVI.

This miscarriage of letters will end some fine day by overturning the little brains I have left. I have, I assure you, sent five letters before the receipt of yours from Milan, which has taken twelve years off my head; and if it had not arrived, I was on the point of strapping on my wallet and marching off. I might at least have served as an overseer to the works of your new edifice. All this is a reason the more to prove that you have found a treasure; and, as the Neapolitan proverb says,

"*Let him who has money, build; and him who has a wind, put to sea.*"

But what say you to my sight, which is hourly declining, so that I can scarcely read a letter without holding it at a considerable distance? My head, however, does not otherwise suffer; and I every day feel that the absence of all thought was, and is, of the greatest service to me.

Last week, by special luck, I concluded my bargain of the twenty scudi a month; so that, on that point, I have no further anxiety. All that may now be made will be so much more added. I inform you of this, that (should occasion warrant) you may avail yourself of it.

Yesterday Augusto began to draw his first half-eye. What he may turn out in this line I leave to be inferred from the drawing itself. I salute you, as does Lucrezia, who, by-the-by, is not in very good health. Here we have Monsieur Poussin nearer to the other world than this; and my dear Signor Giulio Martelli also confined to his bed with a diseased leg, and, what is still worse, with the weight of

seventy-three years on his shoulders. Heaven relieve them both, and grant to you all the good you richly merit! Meantime, I esteem and embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, the last day of October, 1665.

LETTER XVII.

The commission of "*your Signoria*" with respect to the Padre Cavalli has been duly executed, in conformity with your orders; and now to answer your very minute questions.

In the first place, the "*Attilius Regulus*" measures in breadth four palms and something more, in length rather more than two palms and a half. The price I received was an hundred piastres, placed under a Parmesan cheese, sent to me in a box; and for the aforesaid picture I could since have had an hundred

doubloons. Had I the same subject now to paint, I would not take less than four hundred.

For the picture of the "*Witches*," it measures two *bracchie* and a quarter in breadth, and one and a half in length—perhaps a little more. The original price was fifteen doubloons: it is now twenty years since I painted it. If Signor Rossi would have parted with it, he might frequently have had four hundred scudi down: at one time he had an offer of five hundred! I have prophesied, that when I shall be no more, it will bring a thousand—death sharpens curiosity with respect to all things. The picture is veiled by a silken curtain. And thus, with my usual fidelity to your commands, I have satisfied your curiosity on these points.

I have not yet painted the "*Giants*," nor the "*Œdipus*;" the others are done. It is true, however, that I have some thought of painting those subjects. The Ambassador Priuli, during his residence in Rome, had from me three pictures, the one large and two middle-sized:

another (Ambassador) from Paris, has bespoke four, with a very small one; and this I believe is all the information your worship asks. Pray add to this, that nothing French arrives at Rome with any taste for the arts, that does not procure some work of mine. With respect to health, it goes on as tolerably as possible; but I must keep clear of the cold. As to going to Venice, I am not at all certain it would answer; and for the present I commend myself to the Destinies. I beg from my soul you will recall me to the Signori Minucci, Signorelli, and Cordini. While I salute you with all the tenderness which I owe you, the Signora Lucrezia and Augusto embrace you with all their hearts.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, December 15, 1666.

LETTER XVIII.

Just as I had believed that this diabolical season had passed away, here we have four days as bad as ever! The cold of this year is so unusually severe, that I have more than once thought I should give up the ghost! My head (which in the great heats is quite disordered) in this rigorous cold is so affected, that I sometimes fear I shall drop down *all' improvviso*, and I am ready to bid good night to my wits, with a "to our merry meeting at the pit of Acheron!" I have suffered two months of intense pain in the head, even with all possible attention to my regimen of chicken broth. My feet are two perpetual lumps of ice, with all the benefit to be derived from woollen stockings which I sent for to Venice. In my own apartments the fire is never extinguished; and, more assiduous about my sensations than even the Cavaliere Cicogli was, there is not a crevice

in my house that I do not carefully stop up myself, and yet I cannot keep myself warm; nor do I believe that the torch of Love, nor even the caresses of a Phryne, would produce that effect. I talk of any thing but my pencil. My canvass lies turned to the wall! and my colours are all, and for ever, dried up! In a word, I think of nothing but chimney-corners, braziers, warming-pans, muffles, woollen gloves, woollen stockings, well-lined caps, and such sort of gear! In fact, dear friend, I find that my wonted ardours are extinct; and what is equally true, is, that I now pass whole days in silence, and that that fire *once* all my own, and which blazed so brightly, has now totally evaporated! Woe unto me, my friend, if I were now reduced to earn a subsistence by my pencil! I should die in harness, or give up the trade altogether.

If you ask me how I spend my days during the winter months? I answer, when the weather is serene, in wandering forth alone, like a

maniac, and visiting all the most solitary places of this region; but when the weather is bad, I shut myself up in the house, pacing my room like one frenzied, or else I take up a book, or listen to the conversation of others rather than talk myself.

Not a week passes in which orders for pictures do not reach me; and to such an extent, that all are now crying out against me. But let them cry: none but the wearer can know where the shoe pinches!

But let us talk of less melancholy matters. I have had our worthy Signor Francesco (who lives in our neighbourhood) with me this morning for two hours. He was occupied in finishing a landscape, and I helped him in many particulars upon this as upon other similar occasions. I desired him to remember, that he has always the privilege of claiming my services since he comes recommended by you.

His manners do not displease me: his vocation in the art is indisputable, provided he applies

himself with diligence, and that he is not too easily pleased with what he has done. He salutes you affectionately, and complains that he no longer receives any letters from you, which I also may repeat.

Last week the Signor Câvaliere Fabroni came to me, with the intention of absenting himself (from the amateur theatricals) for this time. He, however, changed his intention, and recited the part of Pasquilla, in some comedies which were acted in the palace of the Lord Constable *(di Colonna):* he recited *all' improvviso.* We both talked much of you, and of those divine times, (now so long passed away) enjoyed on the banks of the Arno!

Pray give me some account of your health. —I do not say of your fortune, which I know to be always the same. Tell me if you are writing any plays? How does the Signor Cosimo?

The Signora Lucrezia and Augusto both desire to unite in offering you their respects.

In the ensuing season, prepare yourself to receive us; I have no longer the patience to defer my visit. Should you want money in the mean time, remember I have always enough for you; and so I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

Rome, January 26, 1666.

LETTER XIX.

I write to you on my return from the valley of Jehosaphat; that is, after the exhibition of *San Giovanni Decollato*, for such this festival has been to me this year. A brother of a Pope, with his four sons, have pleased to enter themselves as novices into this company (of San Giovanni); and in order to extinguish all hope, in every one who may hereafter exhibit his works on the occasion of this festival, they

have actually spoliated the finest galleries in Rome of their most superb pictures, for the exhibition; and particularly the celebrated collection of the Queen of Sweden, which alone were sufficient to intimidate the very devil himself.

The primary motive of their lordships' acting in this manner is, simply to exclude the works of all living artists from the exhibition. This intention on their parts was sufficient to determine me on mine, to enter the lists; and I finally obtained (though not without some trouble,) that I alone of all living artists should be permitted to compete with the mighty dead.

I swear to you, my dear friend, that I never was so wound up to any enterprize before; and as so great an occasion might never again occur for distinguishing myself, I have laid aside every other engagement, that I might start freely for the prize which fame may still have in reserve for me. I now give you to understand (that you may rejoice with me,) that I was able to raise

my head, even in the midst of all these Achilles of the art of painting. As I know you will desire to learn what were the subjects of my pictures, I inform you, that one was the story of "Saul," taken at that moment when the Witch conjures up the spirit of the prophet Samuel to commune with the King. This picture is twelve palms in height and nine in width.

The other (nine palms high and five wide), represented St. George in the act of triumphing over the vanquished Dragon: and these are my excuses, dear friend, that I have not been able to write to you.

For the rest, your embarrassments wound my very soul; and I shall never cease to repeat to you, that if you want pecuniary assistance my purse is ever full, when you have occasion to use it, without your thanks being required.

It grieves me to learn that Cesti intends transporting himself to Venice, a place which he

ought to shun like the plague, that he may not revive the recollection of those events of which he was the cause. Remember me to Signor Cosimo; and salute all our friends for me, while I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, September 15, 1668.

LETTER XX.

Ring out the bells! at last after thirty years residence in Rome, of hopes blasted and complaints vainly reiterated against men and gods, the occasion is accorded me for giving one altar-piece to the public. The Signor Felippo Nerli, (the Pope's *Depositario)* resolved upon vanquishing the obstinacy of my destiny, has endowed a chapel in the church of *San Giovanni*

de' Fiorentini; and in despite of the stars themselves, he has determined that *I* shall paint the altar-piece! It is now five months since I began it, and I had only just laid it aside, with the intention of taking it up after Lent, when the occurrence of the Festa, which the Florentines are obliged to celebrate here, in this church, on the canonization of the *Santa Madelena dei Pazzi*, obliged me to continue to work at it, and to shut myself up in my house, where for this month and a half, I have been suffering agonies, lest I should not have my picture finished in time for their festival. This occupation has kept me secluded, not only from all epistolary commerce, but from every other in the world; and I can truly say, that I have so far forgotten myself, as even to neglect to eat. So arduous, indeed, has been my application that when I had nearly finished my work, I was obliged to keep my bed for two days; and had not my recovery been assisted by emetics, certain it is that it would have been all over with me, in

consequence of some obstruction in the stomach. Pity me, then, dear friend, if, for the glory of my pencil, I have neglected to devote my pen to the service of friendship.

I have now been for two days back occupied on my picture of Saint Turpin: whenever it is finished, you shall be duly informed. In the midst of all this, give me your good wishes! Expect to see us once more; for it is an event I have no longer spirit to defer.

The Signora Lucrezia, who is far from well, and Augusto, who is not much better, desire to salute you, and anxiously desire to see you. They are still daily occupied in recalling the delightful days passed at Strozzavolpe. Kiss the hands of Signor Fabbretti in my name, while I embrace you with all my soul.

Your true friend,

S. Rosa.

P. S. The Doctor Oliva salutes you.

Rome, 11th October, 1669.

APPENDIX.

CONTENTS.

CANTATA.
MUSIC.
ORIGINAL LETTERS.
CATALOGUE OF PICTURES.

CANTATA

DEL

SALVATOR ROSA.

With a Fragment of the original Music, authenticated by Dr. Burney.

Non à tregua nè fine il duolo mio.
Ricordati Fortuna che son nel mondo,
E son di carne anch' io.
Venne solo alla vita
Per stentar e partir,
Sudar da cane ;
E tra pene infinita
Speme non ho d'assicurarmi un pane.

Per me sol si vede sordo il ciel,
Scuro il sol, secca la terra,
Ov'io di pace ho fede
Colà porta il gran diavolo la guerra.

S'io fo' l' bucato piove;
S'io metto il piè nel mare,
Il mar s'adira.
Se andasse all' Indie Nove
Non vale il mio testone più d'una lira.

Non vado al macellaro,
Benchè avessi a comprar di carne un grosso,
Che per destino avaro
Non mi pesi la carne al par dell' osso.
S'io vo à palazzo à sorte,
L'anticamera ognor mi mostra a dito;
I satrapi di corte
Con le lingue mi trinciano il vestito.

Son di fede Cristiano
E mi bisogna credere a l'Ebreo,
Sallo il Ghetto Romano
E il guardarobba mio Ser Mardocheo,
Non à tregua, &c.

S'io son desto, o nel letto
Sempre ho la mente stivalata e varia,
Senz' esser architetto
Fabbrico tutto il dì castelli in aria.

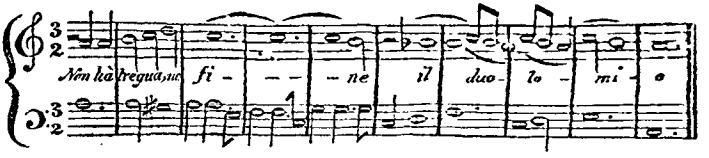
Villa non ho ne stanza,
Altri an d'argento in fin' a l'orinale,
Ricco son di speranza,
E per fede commisso ho l'ospidale.

Ma di grazia osservate,
Quando si sente un caldo dell' inferno,
In mezzo dell' estade
Io marcio col vestito dell' inverno.
Suol dir, chi à da mangiare,
Che i commodi e i quattrini,
Alfin son sogni che dolce minchionare
Haver pari l'entrate a' suoi bisogni.
Oh Dio! son pur pittore,
Nè posso figurarmi un miglior sogno!
Sto sempre d'un colore,
Ne mi riesce mai alcun disegno.
Legni Iberi e Francese,
Col nocchiero pennello a l'onde io spalmo,
Dono ad altri i paesi,
In tempo ch'io non ò di terra un palmo.

Non so che sia Fortuna,
Pago à prezzo di stenti un dì felice;
Non ho sostanza alcuna
E ch'io speri, e ch'io soffri, ognun mi dice.

Credete al vostro Rosa,
Che senza versi e pitture
Il mondo è bello ; e la più sana cosa
In questi tempi è non aver cervello.

Ve le dirò più chiare,
Hoggi il saper più non si stima un fico.
Da me ciascuno impare
Che assai meglio è morir ch'esser mendico.
Non à tregua, &c. &c. &c.

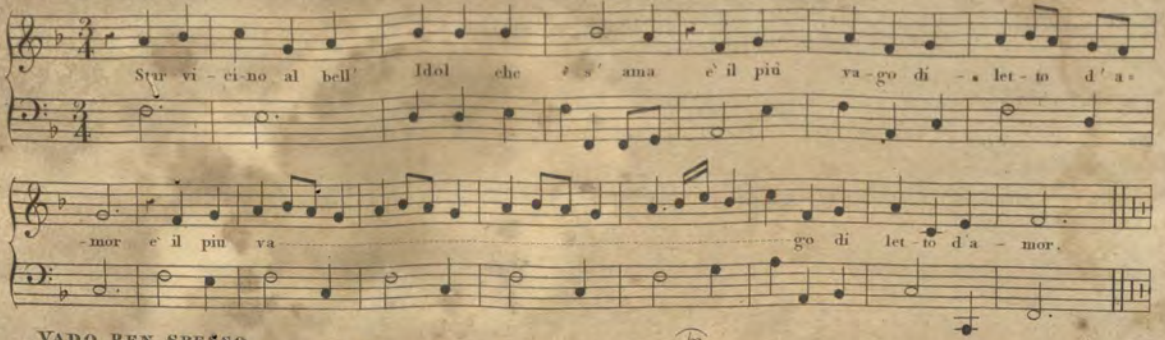


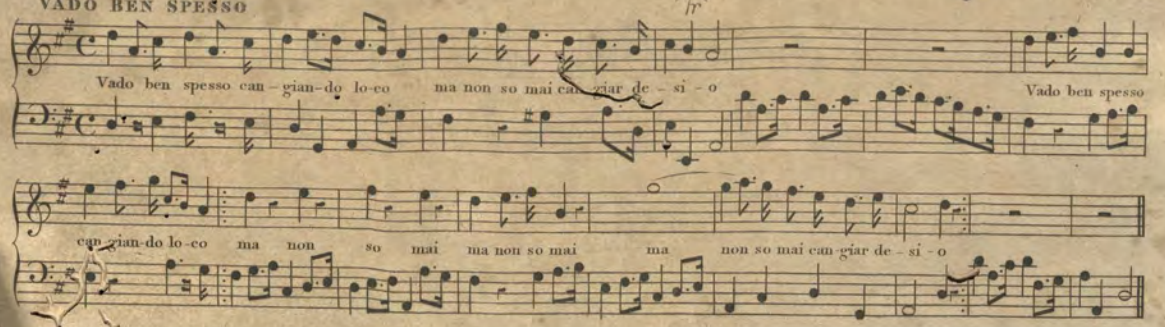
TWO AIRS

The Words and Music by Salvator Rosa.

from Dr Burney's Hist.y of Music.

STAR VICINO



VADO BEN SPESSO

Vado ben spesso can - gian-do lo-co ma non so mai can - giar de - si - o
Vado ben spesso
can-gian-do lo-co ma non so mai ma non so mai ma non so mai can-giar de - si - o

mem.s of Salvator Rosa Vol.2 page 316.

Sid.y Hall sculp. Bury St. Bloomsb.y

LETTERE

AL SIG. DOTT. GIO. BATISTA RICCIARDI.*

Si conosce, che voi avete indisposizione negli occhi, mentre giudicate sì male della pittura. Povero Albano, che quando crede d' esser giunto nell' ultima perfezione dell' arte, il Ricciardi, vedendo una sua pittura, dice non aver visto mai peggio! Or va: cambia un paesino piccolo di mia mano per un quadretto d' un uomo così famoso, con isperanza, che il Ricciardi, come non professore di pittura, e come poco sano degli occhi, non solamente l' avesse a non disprezzare, ma in qualche cosa a piacerli! Bisogna stare in cervello, perchè voi ne sapete più di me, Sig. Metrodoro mio savio e gentile. Ma che non vi

* Lettore di Filosofia Morale nell' Università di Pisa, e poeta allora celebre. Il Rosa avea barattato con un quadro dell' Albano, un proprio paese fatto pel Ricciardi.

piacciano le tre farfalle, o quest' è troppa severità, qual' io confesso non intenderla, e per questo parleremo d' altro, rimettendomi in tutto, e per tutto al vostro gusto, giacchè vi veggo così lontano dall' opinione che la maggior parte hanno di questo uomo. Un' altra volta vi prometto di non cascare in quest' errore, giacchè mi ditedi stimar più le cose mie.

Vi do nuová d' aver già venduti i due miei quadri grandi all' Imbasciatore di Venezia, cavaliere di straordinaria compitezza, il quale venendomi a visitare, si sforzò far di me quella stima non ancora espressa con parole da bocca di personaggio simile, a segno tale, che m' obbligò a dargli i due miei quadri alla prima sua offerta, che da un suo gentiluomo, e mio conoscente mi fece fare. Il pagamento fu di ducati 300, il qual prezzo, tuttochè non sia a proporzione della fatica de' miei quadri, è però vantaggioso a' miei fini.

Vi supplico dunque, occorrendovi detta somma di denaro, a prevalervene con quella libertà e schiettezza d' animo, con la quale ve l' offerisco, avendovi più d' una volta detto, che non ho cosa in questo mondo, che a parte con voi non l' abbia; e se voi non lo fate,

crederò sempre, che voi crediate, che lo dica per complimento.

Ricciardi, chi v' ha consacrato tutto il suo arbitrio, e tutto il suo affetto, deve ancora offerirvi ogni sua sostanza.

La Canzone, se me la manderete, mi sarà cara, perchè è parto del vostro ingegno, ma per dirvela con schiettezza, in sentir Cascina* mi vien voglia di cacare, non essendo soggetto questo da cantar fra i Volunni Bandinelli, e Salvador Rosa. Intendetemi sanamente.

Quì le vampe Nemee si vanno preparando bestialissimamente, e per certo che sempre mi confesso più minchione a voler fare l' estate a Roma. Ma voi avete colpa di ogni inconveniente, ed a suo tempo me ne pagherete il fio. Saluto tutti codesti signori, e mi farete grazia dire al Sig. Lanfreducci, che io di già l'ho servito, avendo fatto copiare le due arie chiestemi, ma che resta che l' amico venga per essè, conforme restammo d' accordo, essendo tra di noi una distanza di tre miglia. Del resto non ho altre nuove, che più mi consolino, che sentire, che state bene di salute.

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* Al Rosa dispiaceva, che dopo che il Ricciardi gli avea indirizzata una sua canzone, ne indirizzasse una al Cascina.

La Sig. Lucrezia, e Orsola vi abbracciano in mia compagnia. Questo dì 6 di Luglio, 1652.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA II.

Fui breve nello scrivervi la settimana passata, e mi converrà esser tale ancora per tutto il mese di Settembre, che seguirà, forzato dall' impegno, che sentirete.

Monsignor Corsini eletto Nunzio di Francia, dopo avere specolato in che avesse potuto dare per regalare quella corona al suo arrivo colà, risolse la settimana passata, ch' io li facessi una *Battaglia grande*, la qual sarà per l' appunto della misura del Baccanale, ch' io feci, che voi sapete; cioè di quattordici palmi di lunghezza, e nove di altezza. E perchè non v' è altro tempo che quaranta giorni, dovendo detto Monsignore partire per la fine del mese di Settembre, e sapendo, che nessun altro pittore l' avrebbe potuto servire nel ristretto di così pochi giorni, ed oltre a questo incontrarsi ad applicare ne' presenti caldi d'Agosto, ha chiusi gli occhi al prezzo dimandatone di dugento

doble il meno; ed io all'incontro volontieri ho abbracciata l'occasione, sì per il prezzo ottimo, come per l'onorevolezza, la quale non può esser maggiore, vedendo, che un mio quadro si spicca da una Roma per regalo ad un Rè di Francia. Ma sentite quest'altra. Il Nunzio eletto per Spagna, il quale è Monsignor Gaetano, m'avrebbe dato cinquecento scudi dei due miei quadri de' Filosofi, se in quest'accidente fussero stati in mio potere, per portarli a donare al Rè di Spagna. Or che ne dite, amico? Non s'avanza nella gloria? non si cresce nella riputazione ed opinion dell'arte? Però, amico, vi prego a compatirmi, se fra questo mentre sarò breve nello scrivervi, atteso che ho lo capo così pieno di stragi, e rumori, che sembro un'Aletto.

Oh quanto m'è giunto nuovo l'avviso degli scialacquamenti del vostro fratello, al quale mi saria confessato a ginocchi scoverti; mà quel che importa è, che sia successo questo con danno del vostro patrimonio, il quale a me dispiace sino all'anima. Spero però, che il vostro non sia per mancarvi. In ogni caso, Ricciardi mio, son quì per voi, e vi giuro che mentre avrò un giulio, sarà mezzo vostro; però state allegro, e ridete in faccia alla disgrazia. Adesso ne

incachiamo i Cresi, e i Cecili, e tanto basta, essendo io in anima e in corpo tutto vostro.

Vi ridico, che voi errate a supporre, che l' ovatino non sia mano dell' Albano, ma di qualche Romanesco, poichè è più certo, che sia mano sua; ma perchè è delle cose ultime fatte con gl' incomodi della vecchiaja. Bisogna aver pacienza: il quale quadretto, tuttochè non sia di quel gusto, ch' io lo vorrei, son sicuro però, che in questo paese non ci sarà nessuno, che lo saprà fare migliore. Ma perchè io non voglio disputar con voi di pittura per adesso, mi riserberò a rifarvi qualche cosa del mio, e ripigliarmelo. Volete altro, Sig. Coccia?

In quanto alla Battaglia delle tre braccia e mezzo, e due d' altezza, che voi m' accennate ch' io vi dica il prezzo; vi dirò con la libertà solita il mio sentimento. Voi già credo, che sapete la repugnanza, che io ho in sì fatto genere di pittura, atteso che questo è il mio luogo topico di superar quanti pittori mi vogliono dar di naso, oltre alla straordinaria fatica che ci vuole. Però se vi preme, potrete dire a codesto amico, che per vostro amore non li farò spendere più di trecento scudi; dichiarandomi, che quando non fusse cosa motivatami da voi, d' escluderla per qualsivoglia prez-

zo, sapendosi di già, che ho quasi voto di non far simili sorte di pitture, che non mi sieno pagate al pari dei Raffaelli, e dei Tiziani. Ad alia.

Il P. Cavalli*, qual fu ieri da me, è così parziale del vostro nome, che poco più; ed in verità è uomo degnissimo. Del resto, Ricciardi mio, vi prego a stare allegramente, e credere, che il mio arbitrio, e la mia borsa è vostra. Vi saluta la Signora Lucrezia, e Orsola, ed io di cuore reverisco tutti codesti amici, e voi abbraccio col cuore.—Di Roma, questo dì 17 d' Agosto, 1652.

Di V. S. Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

Avvisatemi se il sonno è piaciuto al Sig. Lanfreducci.

LETTERA III.

In quest' ordinario non ricevo vostre lettere, e il tutto attribuisco a qualche non ordinaria occupazione. Il mio quadro domani s' invierà per la volta di Francia, onde mi resta d'augurari' l' istessa felicità

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* Al P. Cavalli dedicò il Ricciardi una canzone.

conseguita in Roma, la quale vi posso giurare, ch' è stata forse la maggiore, che abbia conseguito pittura moderna (per non parlare dell' antiche) a segno tale, che 'l mio nome questa volta ha fatto un gran salto.

Il libro richiestomi non si trova, e di già, mi dice il nostro Signor Brunetti d' avervelo accennato. Adesso, Ricciardi mio, posso dire d' essere restituito alla mia pristina libertà, non avendo avuto un giorno voto di processione * da che diedi fine a questo mio sempre benedetto quadro. Vi ricordo a volermi bene, ed a salutarmi il nostro Signor Fabbretti, insieme con tutti codesti Signori della vostra conversazione. Mentre io tutto solitario vi ricordo scrivermi quando potete, e ad amarmi sin che avrete fiato. V' abbraccio di cuore.

—Di Roma questo dì 19 di 8bre, 1652.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

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* Di gente corsa a vedere il quadro.

LETTERA IV.

Amico caro,

Gratissimi mi sono stati, e mi saranno sempre i vostri avvertimenti intorno al pensare all' avvenire, cioè di mettere insieme qualche bajocco per lo mantenimento della riputazione, come anche per lo comodo della vita, confessando ancor io, che senza denari è impossibile poter conseguire quel credito alle nostre operazioni che noi desideriamo, e che veramente si doverebbe; onde mi risolvo di far dal canto mio le dovute diligenze, ogni volta, che la fortuna vi vorrà concorrere anch' essa.

Il quadro andò per il suo viaggio, avendo sortito gli applausi accennativi. Ma che ne dite? potevasi fare in peggiori riscontri de' presenti rumori della Francia, in tempo che quella Corona ave altro in testa che pittura? Queste son le filosofie da rinnegare; tralasciandovi di dire alcune altre cosette intorno alla parte del donativo di non piccole consequenze per lo svanimento de' miei fini. Però lascio, che operi Dio, non potendosi, per la parte che s' appartiene a me, che guadagnare di molto, se non in altro, nella riputazione.

A quest' ora averete ricevuta una mia, nella quale averete inteso il mio motivo circa l' andare a Napoli questa Quadragesima.

Gli schizzi della Battaglia non ve gli mando, perchè è troppo necessario, che stiano presso di me, per non dare in altra occasione nel medesimo. Ma se è vero che andate avanzandovi col vostro libro de' disegni, ve ne manderò una rimessa.

La Signora Lucrezia è gravida, e se la passa con la solita ..... indisposizioni, unitamente con Orsola vi baciano le mani.

L' Arcidiacono se n' andò all' altra vita. Il Cielo li dia colà cervello, giacchè in questa dimostrò sempre d' averne poco.

Saluto tutti gli amici, ed abbraccio il Sig. Fabbretti, mentre di cuore mi vi rassegno tutto amore.—Di Roma, questo dì 16 d' Ottobre, *1652.*

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

E' quì comparsa una lettera del Sig. Ceffini* oltre-

* Cavaliere di S. Stefano, e Lettor di Pisa in Legge.

modo ingegnosa, e perchè contiene le mie lodi, ringraziatelo a mio nome.

LETTERA V.

Poter del mondo! non mi par mica vero, che la lettera ricevuta in quest' ordinario sia vostra, essendo stato sei ordinarj un dietro l' altro non solamente privo di sì fatta grazia, ma nè anche di quelle, che mi, soleva fare in vostro difetto il Sig. Cosimo nostro. Le maledizioni che ho mandate alla Signora Commedia*, sono state stravagantissime, giacchè per sua cagione m' è convenuto far sì lungo digiuno; e ne ho veduto riuscire almeno questa vendetta d' esser stata di qualche tedio mediante la sua lunghezza, il cui difetto mi pervenne all' orecchio prima del vostro avviso, per le relazioni avutene dal Sig. Canonico da Scornio mio vicino, e bonissimo gentiluomo. Vi scrissi ultimamente una mia lunghissima, nella quale vi davo ragguaglio di tutte le mie disgrazie sotto il solito nome

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* Gio. Batista Ricciardi compose varie commedie in prosa molto facete.

del Sig. Fabbretti, informandovi di quanto è successo dal vostro silenzio in quà; perciò vi prego a far la diligenza, e darmene subito avviso della ricevuta d' essa, altrimente starò sempre in pensiero che altri non prendano le mie lettere. Sentirà V. S. in essa l' infamità orrenda commessa da' miei nemici, avendomi voluto far la spia sotto pretesto di rispondere alla Satira. Ma, Iddio, che vede l' intenzione di tutti, ed è somma verità, ha fatto riuscire le cose al contrario di quello, ch' egli avevano tramato. Basta; se non v' è pervenuta nelle mani a quest' ora, e voi fate ogni sforzo per recuperarla. Ma torniamo a noi. Da sì fatte indegnità argomentate, come possa stare l' animo d' un vostro amico tutto bile, tutto spirito, tutto fuoco. E pure mi bisogna portar la maschera del disprezzo, e della sofferenza, col considerare, che i loro fuochi furono di paglia, e i miei di pietra amianto. *

L' obbligazioni, ch' io professo all' accennato Sig. Camillo Rubiera, gentiluomo d' una smisurata intrepidezza, sono grandi, e mi dispiace in occasioni simili

* L' amianto non si consuma, benchè arda.

di non aver fortune pari al mio animo, che vorrei far dir di me al sicuro; ma bisogna aver pacienza, e restar sotto per non poter far altro, restandomi solamente la speranza di pagare così fatti beneficj con la liberalità de' miei amici.

Oh Dio! di quanto insegnamento mi sono state queste avversità, perchè mi hanno fatto conoscere la sviscerateza d' alcune anime nelle quali io non m' avereì mai creduto, che la legge della pietà, e dell' affetto v' avesse albergato; e pure ho veduto miracoli; come per lo contrario, chi tenevo per indubitato, ch' avessero avuto a prendere la spada in mia difesa, gli ho esperimentati più taciturni de' medesimi muti!

Piaccia dunque al Cielo, che riceva insegnamento da sì fatti accidenti; per approfittarmene nell' avvenire; e confessovi eternamente, che anima più bella della vostra non havvene al mondo, viva Iddio.

Dei disegni delle scene sarete servito, massime delle boscherecce avendole da far' io; di quelli altri, spero ancora che resterete sodisfatto, avendone questa mattina pregato un pittor di prospettive Milanese valoroso. Quello di paesi ve lo potria mandare per l'altra settimana, ma bisogna pure aspettar il comodo

di quest' altro civile, per mandare ogni cosa insieme. Datemi nuova, se l' estate la farete in Firenze, la quale stanza giudicherei meglio assai, che Pisa.

Il P. Cavallo è comparso, e dopo molti discorsi mi disse: in fatti conosco, che nessuno vi vuol più bene del Sig. Ricciardi, poichè ne parla con troppa tenerezza; considerate adesso voi s' io ingrasso a sì fatte attestazioni. Sentirete dal nostro Sig. Cordini la volontà del nostro Sig. Volunnio, il quale m' esorta a stampare, ma che prima averebbe caro di risentire tutte le mie satire.

Ma udite a che segno è arrivata l' affezione d' un avvocato mio amico, che ha voluto tentare di mettere in Rota la mia causa per immortalarsi con questa singolarità; ma io l' ho dissuaso, e pregato a non parlarne; e per certo, che questo è un uomo di molto garbo, e in questa Corte cammina per l' acquisto del primato, e si chiama l' avvocato Serroni mio svisceratissimo.

Voi non mi mandaste mai quel pensiero per il quadro; e pure v' ho pregato più d' una volta. Di grazia non mi mancate, chè lo voglio accommodare per le feste.

Ho avuto caro, che vi sia capitata la tragedia del Gherardelli, e che, col parere di tutti, vi sia piaciuta

più la difesa, che l'opera, attesochè la difesa è veramente cosa degna d'uomo grande. Averete ancora osservato il mio disegno del frontespizio, nel quale io non volli, che si mettesse il mio nome. Adesso l'infame dello Schiribandolo dice, volere stampare contro della difesa alla barba della riverenza, che tutti gli altri hanno usato ai morti.

Con questo, e molt' altre belle *sciose** mi vi ricordo tutto vostro, pregandovi a salutarmi gli amici che sapete, mentre il simile fà a V. S. la Signora Lucrezia, e Orsola.—Di Roma, questo dì . . . . di Maggio, 1654.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA VI.

Godo dell' avviso, che siete in Fiorenza, e che vi godiate il cordialissimo Sig. Cordini, la conversazione del quale non può se non recarvi straordinario sollievo. Avvisatemi se avete pensiero di trattenervici tutta l' estate, e se il Sig. Cosimo è con esso voi.

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* Sciose, cioè cose, detto all'uso de' Franzesi per ischerzo.

De' miei interessi non vi scriverò cosa nessuna, bastandomi solamente il dirvi, che la quiete si ha preso il bando affatto dal mio animo per colpa di queste benedette satire; che m' avessi pur rotto il collo prima d' incominciarle. In somma, concorrono più cose a costituirmi infelicissimo, a dispetto di quanta prudenza e virtù si trova nel mondo.

Pure questa settimana hanno abiurato due de' miei nemici nel sentire quest' ultimo mio componimento. Resto maravigliato che non m' avvisate cosa nessuna intorno alla visita ch' aveste in Pisa d' un tal Canonico Perruca, parente dello Scornio *, e pure so, che si discorse di me, e delle mie satire, e nel ritorno, che ha fatto quì in Roma, non han mancato (nel sentir, che veniva di Pisa) domandar de' vostri talenti, e de' vostri genj nel comporre. In somma, se non muoro disperato io, non morrà mai nessun' uomo del mondo.

Dei disegni della scena vi servii subito, cioè di quello, che dovevo far io; resta solo, che sia finito l' altro di prospettiva, il quale averò questa settimana da un pittore di tal genere valorosissimo, e per l' altro ordinario vi manderò ogni cosa insieme; e se fosse

* Canonico Pisano.

stato servizio, che l'avesse avuto a far solamente io, a quest' ora sareste restato servito.

Io non intendo nè sforzarvi, nè persuadervi intorno al particolar di Volterra, essendo debito mio l' obbedire alla vostra volontà, e l' incontrare le vostre sodisfazioni, e così vi prometto.

Starò con ansietà grandissima aspettando il pensiero del quadro, e pure so d' avervene scritto più volte. Il Capitolo del Melosi* ve lo trascriverò quì dietro per obbedirvi. Avvisatemi di grazia, quanto siete per trattenervi in Firenze; ed io stimerei assai meglio far l' estate costì che in Pisa per la vostra salute.

Datemi qualche avviso del Sig. Giulio: Non potendo aver risposta d' alcune mie scrittegli, non so s' è morto o vivo. Del resto mi vi raccommando, assicurandovi, che la maggiore mia consolazione è il pensare, che ho voi per amico. Comandatemi, e vi bacio le mani.—Di Roma, questo dì 13 di Giugno, 1654.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

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* Il Melosi Poeta faceto.

LETTERA VII.

M' avete fatto una gola d' altro, che di baje con la nuova datami d' essere stato nella Carfagnana, e goduto del selvaticume di quel paese, tanto geniale alla nostra natura. Per certo vi giuro, che non so, che sia stata felicità da Monte Rufoli, e Barbajano in quà; e pure quei luoghi, come voi dite, non vagliono nulla in riguardo di questo accennatomi. In somma non vi penso che non m' attristi, segno evidente che furono di non ordinario nutrimento all' animo, e di salute al corpo. Ma parliamo d' altro, che per essermene appena ricordato, mi vien voglia di lagrimare.

La villetta da voi offertami, concorro ancor io, ch' è gran prerogativa l'esser sua libera; ma quello stare vicino all' abitato guasta ogni sua bellezza, oltrechè non essendoci bosco fa, che in tutte le cose riesca presso di me imperfetta.

Oh quanto mi dispiace della disgrazia del Signor Cavalier Leoli, e per certo, che sento nell' anima questa sua afflizione. Vi prego a riverirlo a mio nome, come vi prego a fare con tutto il resto della sua buona conversazione. Del Canonico non dirò cosa nessuna: bastami solo, che di questa cammedia sia l' unico Ber-

toldino, e gli si fanno burle, che non le manderia giù una balena, a segno tale che dice volersene o ritornare in patria, o andarsene in Francia. Se 'l Signor Lancia sortisce la medesima ventura in codeste parti, può dire d' essere accommodato per le feste.

Son molte settimane, che me la vado spassando in intagliare d' acqua forte, ed a suo tempo ne vedrete l' operazioni, giacchè non ho avuto ventura di far quello, che di presente fo, nella destinata solitudine di Strozzavolpi. Basta, riserberemo dell' altre cose da fare quando ritornerà la colomba. Fra questo mentre ricordatevi, che si va in là con gli anni, e che molte cose e disastri che la gioventù sopportava, l' età non così facilmente l' ammette. Dico questo non già per sollecitarvi, giovandomi il credere che in voi fiano le medesime inclinazioni, che sono in me per non perdere affatto quel poco di speranza, che mi resta in sì fatte materie.

Un saluto al Sig. Cosimo, et alla Signora vostra sorella, così da mia parte, come della Signora Lucrezia, e di cuore vi abbraccio.—Di Roma, questo dì 20 di Novembre, 1660.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA VIII.

Prima di scrivere ho consegnato la cassetta al procaccia di Fiorenza. *Al Signor Simon Torrigiani, nella posta di Fiorenza, franca per il Sig. Geo. Batista Ricciardi. A Pisa.* Con il quadretto ci troverete anche il disegno del Policrate in due pezzi, conforme fu disegnato a Strozzavolpe. Quello dell' Alessandro con Diogene, Filolao, e due altri, cioè quello del Democrito, al quale manca già un dito di disegno, il quale non ho potuto per ancora trovare, ed il suo compagno del Diogene, che butta la tazza,* il tutto benissimo condizionato nella medesima maniera, ch' ella me l' inviò a questa volta.

Circa ai due suoi quadri, quanto è stato a tempo l' avviso, che uno vuol esser per l' alto, e l' altro per lo lungo! Intorno agli altri ch' ella desiderava per l' amico, i pittori che facevano di fiori comodamente bene, sono andati a Torino. Ve ne restano alcuni altri, che fanno meglio, ma i prezzi non sono per le borse di cotesto Cielo, e con simil sorta di persone io

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* Tutti questi sono disegni di carte intagliate dal Rosa.

non voglio aver che fare. Di paesi e di animali non ci è cosa che mi sodisfaccia (parlando per la riga del buon mercato) che del resto ci sarebbe da svogliarsi.

Mi dispiace, che la casa non riesca di sodisfazione, e che vi costringa ad abitare a soffitto, il quale incomodo sarà cagione, ch' ella applichi a perfezionare il tugurio prima di quello, ch' aveva talvolta risoluto di fare.

Mi sono tutto rallegrato all' avviso ch' Ella non sia mai stato meglio di salute della flussione. Spero in Cristo, che anderà via ancor essa, e così resterete affatto libero. Il rimedio del non applicare è la manna vera del Paradiso, l'unico rimedio certo da conservarsi, onde vi esorto a servirvene.

Non mancate d' abbracciare a mio nome il Signor Cosimo, e di riverire tutti di casa a mio nome, come di ricordarmi obbligatissimo a tutti cotesti Signori, mentre di cuore, in compagnia di Farfanicchio, e della Signora Lucrezia, vi baciamo le mani.—Di Roma questo dì 11 di Marzo 1662.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA IX.

Non ho potuto prima di questo giorno darvi nuova del mio ritorno da Loreto, il qual sortì alli 6. del presente mese di Maggio. Sono stato quindici giorni in continuo moto, et il viaggio è assai più curioso e pittoresco di cotesto di Fiorenza senza comparazione, attesochè è d' un misto così stravagante d' orrido e di domestico, di piano e di scosceso, che non si può desiderar di vantaggio per lo compiacimento dell' occhio.

Vi posso giurare, che sono assai più belle le tinte d' una di quelle montagne, che quanto ho veduto fra tutto cotesto cielo di Toscana. La vostra Verucola (quale io stimavo di qualche orridezza) per l' avvenire la chiamerò giardino, in comparazione d' una delle trascorse Alpi. Oh Dio! e quante volte vi ho desiderato, quante volte chiamato alla vista d' alcuni solitarissimi romitorj veduti per istrada, i quali se mi han fatto gola, lo sa la Fortuna. Ci trasportammo in Ancona, ed in Sorolo, e nel ritorno, in Assisi, di più del viaggio; luoghi tutti di straordinario diletto per la pittura.

Vidi a Terni (cioè quattro miglia fuori di strada) la famosa Cascata del Velino, fiume di Rieti; cosa da far spiritare ogni incontentabile cervello per la sua orrida bellezza, per vedere un fiume che precipita da un monte di mezzo miglio di precipizio, ed innalza la sua schiuma altrettanto. Assicuratevi, che in questo luogo non davo occhiata, nè movevo passo, che non meditasse voi.

Datemi nuova di vostra salute, come di tutti di vostra casa, nè mancate d' abbracciarmi il Signor Cosimo, e di riverire sino ai gatti a mio nome. A tutti cotesti Signori centomila baciamani, e di cuore a voi auguro ogni bene, mentre col cuore vi abbraccio.— Di Roma, questo dì 13 di Maggio, 1662.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA X.

Ricevo il secondo plico, e subito fu portato come l' altro, ma senza la fortuna di poterlo consegnare in man propria del Sig. Conti, il quale non ho mai più veduto; e come voi dite, s non si vien per quattrini, non credo che si farà nulla al proposito. A questo io

non ho colpa, avendoli significato, che ero pronto per sborsarli ogni somma da lui domandatami.

I giorni passati fu da me un certo prete, il quale mi disse d' avermi a sborsare scudi dieci, e questo credo, che sieno quelli che V. S. mi dice che 'l Sig. Marcantonio ha rimessi quì in Roma per detta causa. Io non gli volsi pigliare, dicendoli, che quando mi saranno domandati, gli ripiglierò da lui, e così restammo. Per dirvela, questo negozio in mano al Bregiotti, a me non piace nulla, essendo questo un soggetto da niente e di nessuna stima; ma perchè è stato eletto dal Signor Conti, il qual voi stimate, io non dico cosa nessuna, tanto più, che in dette materie sono il Bertoldino del secolo, nè posso sentir cosa di maggior noja che questo nome di lite.

Ho concluso i due quadri, che stavo lavorando, i soggetti de' quali sono del tutto e per tutto nuovi, nè tocchi mai da nessuno. Ho dipinto in una tela di palmi 8 per lo lungo, Pittagora, lungo la riva del mare, corteggiato dalla sua Setta, in atto di pagare ad alcuni pescatori una rete che stanno tirando, acciò si ridia la libertà ai pesci; motivo tolto da un opuscolo di Plutarco.

L' altro è quando il medesimo, dopo esser stato un

anno in una sotterranea abitazione, alla fine d' esso, aspettato dalla sua Setta così d' uomini come di donne, uscì fuori, e disse venir dagl' Inferi, e d' aver veduto colà l' anima d' Omero, d' Esiodo, ed altre minchionerie appettatorie di quei tempi così dolcissimi di sale. Queste due opere l' ho fatte per esporle alla fine di quest' altro mese, alla festa di S. Giovanni Decollato. Di quanto succederà, ne sarete puntualmente avvisato.

Se vi venissero col leggere pensieri simili, di grazia notateli, attesochè riescono mirabilmente. Del resto saluto il Sig. Cosimo e la Signora sua consorte, con tutti di casa, ed in particolare il mio Sig. Salvatorino, così da mia parte, come della Signora Lucrezia, e Farfanicchio. — Di Roma, questo dì 29 di Luglio, 1662.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XI.

E' superfluo il ricordarmi i trattenimenti di Strozzavolpe dell' anno passato, attesochè non passa giorno, che d' ogni minuzia occorsaci non se ne faccia

una solenne commemorazione con straordinario tormento del pensiero, qual per trovarsi immerso nell' opposito, si crucia in rammentarvene le particolarità. Vi giuro, che alle volte sgrido Augusto, il qual si ricorda di tutto, per non amareggiarne la memoria, e massime in questo mese colmo di tante varietà; ma discorriamo d' altro di grazia.

La festa di S. Giovanni Decollato riuscì solennissima per più rispetti. L' obbligo di farla fù de' Signori Sacchetti, per conseguenza il peso della distribuzione di Pietro da Cortona, come quello che depende, ed è tutto di casa. Vi fù gran concorso di pitture antiche, avendo avuto questi Signori per fine di sfiorare le più celebri gallerie di Roma. Vi esposi, oltre ai due quadri accennativi dei fatti di Pittagora, una tela più grande rappresentando il fatto di Jeremia, quando per ordine dei Principi di Juda è calato in una fossa per profetizzare la rovina di Jerusalem, ma a preghiera dell' Eunuco Ebedmelec n' è cavato fuori. Il numero delle figure erano tredici, e la misura di esso quanto al vivo. Ve ne furono due altri pezzi, i quali comecchè non furono fatti per quel fine, non ne dirò di vantaggio; e questo è quanto alla festa.

Lessi subito la vita d' Apollonio, composta da Filostrato, con mia particolar sodisfazione, per quel, che s' appartiene alla curiosità; ma non ci ho trovato quello ch' ella mi significò, che ci averia trovato di singolare e stravagante per la pittura, essendo fatti, che quasi tutti darebbono in una cosa medesima, onde vi prego a propormi qualch' altra cosa, acciò vi potessi trovar cose più fuori dell' ordinario, avendovi però notato alcuni fatti per servirmene.

Del pasticcio non mi posso ricordare, che cosa ella si sia, ma stimando voi, che sia cosa, che possa riuscire di vostra sodisfazione, non occorre altri discorsi; e se comporta la spesa dell' andare, e del venire, contento voi, io contentissimo.

Degli accidenti che corrono non dirò nulla, che per essere cose oggimai fatte pubbliche, la fama ne discorre per tutto.

Della lite del Sig. Marcantonio non so che si faccia, poichè da che sborsai al Sig. Conti li scudi quattro, non l' ho più veduto, ed io, come tutto il mondo sa, non parto mai dal monte della Trinità, e tanto calo all' abitato quanto la fama mi ci necessita.

Le stampe son venerate, e richieste, ed a quest' ora pellegrinano per tutto. Ho due altri rami grandi

in ordine, nè posso condurmi ad incominciarli, ricordandomi come furono lavorati quelli dell' anno passato.

Quanto poi mi sia dispiaciuta la nuova della morte del putto, lo sa il cielo; e in riguardo del dolore del Sig. Cosimo, e di sua consorte; ma mi consolo, che le stampe son vigorose *Oh beati color, ch' avvolti in fasce*, etc.

Non mancate scrivendo al Sig. Giacomo ed al Sig. Minucci*, di salutarli a mio nome, come il simile di fare con tutti codesti Signori da me sommamente riveriti, predicati.

Vi ritorno a riplicare di far la diligenza di qualche singolar fatto per la pittura conforme andate leggendo. La Signora Lucrezia, ed Augusto, ed io, vi baciamo le mani di tutto cuore.—Di Roma, *questo dì 16 di* Settembre, 1662.

A tutti di vostra casa un saluto.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

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* Paolo Minucci comentatore del Malmantile.

LETTERA XII.

Vi scrivo queste sole quattro righe per darvi nuova di me, a confusione di voi, che vi siete dimenticato affatto di ragguagliarmi di voi, che altro non desidero in questa vita.

Ho sentito gusto grande, che 'l Brunetti si sia trasferito costà, e sodisfatto in parte alla vostra curiosità.

Nella festa di S. Giovanni Decollato di quest' anno ho esposto un mio quadro grande, con figure quanto il vero, dell' istoria della Congiuria di Catilina,* espressa per l' appunto conforme la descrive Sallustio; ed in particolare agl' intendenti è straordinariamente piaciuta. Ve ne do parte, perchè così devo con un amico, qual voi mi siete. Del resto vi prego a darmi qualche avviso di vostra salute, e di credere, che con me non vive memoria più tenace, che questa del vostro affetto; e Iddio vi conservi.—Di Roma, questo dì 8 di Settembre, 1663.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

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* Questo quadro bellissimo è nel Palazzo del Sig. Bali Martelli in Firenze.

LETTERA XIII.

Resto straordinariamente maravigliato, che un cervello come il vostro si sia lasciato ridurre sino a questo giorno per esperimentare quanto vaglia, e di che tempra si sia Salvador Rosa nell' amicizia.

Ma se voi non ischerzate, m' è forza il credere, che codesta vostra libertà nel pungermi non derivi, che dal considerarmi in qualche parte vostro obbligato. Quando ciò fusse, soffrirò ogni vostra libertà, ma sino a' limiti del dovere, ricordandovi, che nè io, nè voi siamo iddii, e che voi siete uomo, e uomo grande presso di me, io non pretendo d' esser cetrivolo presso degli altri.

Dunque per avervi detto di non voler *fare nelle* vostre tele non più che due o trè figure, tanti schiamazzi, rovine, scapricciature, esperienze, vele di Serse, ed altre infinite querele imprudenti, che non l' averia dette in pasquale ed incolparmi di peccato, ch' io non saprò mai commettere. Chiano, chiano (dice lo Napolitano), non tanto frusciamento; che quando anco mi fussi ristretto non in due o trè, ma in una sola figura di mia mano, averei creduto, che fusse stata bastante per contentar voi, e sofficientissima a servir di com-

pagna non solamente alla vostra ridicola bambocciata, ma viva Iddio! a qualsivoglia pieno quadro di mano di pittore primario. Vi confesso, che non intendo, nè capisco coteste vostre cabale, nè so darmi ad intendere, che in questo accidente foste per pretender più che le tele di mia mano dipinte; ed in questo, se in me fusse stata quella colpa che voi mi rovesciate, non vi averia con trè delle mie lettere sollecitata l' esecuzione, come voi sapete molto bene.

Mà giacchè 'l mio destino mi sforza anche con voi ad esercitar l' apologie (cosa, che mai mi saria immaginata) dico, che intesi di dire, e che sempre dirò, e eternamente così troverete, che da molto tempo in quà sento nell' operare una così straordinaria stanchezza, che per non perdere e straccare il gusto del dipingere, eleggo soggetti facili, e che non mi abbiano a durare molto tempo sotto al pennello, e di rado trapasso il numero delle figure accennatevi; e se in questo volete usare, col non crederlo, le vostre solite interpretazioni, dopo avere attribuito il tutto a mia fierissima disgrazia, datemi licenza, ch' io vi scemi qualche parte dell' ottimo concetto, che sempre ho avuto della vostra bell' alma.

Vedi, Ricciardi: se la nostra contesa si ristrengesse

in materie letterarie, facilmente ti cederei; ma trattandosi di volermi tacciare di poco grato e d' uomo d' animo misurato nella corrispondenza, ti mostrerò sempre i denti, se non per morderti, almeno per difendermi, e mi sarà facilissimo il provarti il contrario, essendo oggimai bastantemente conosciuto, se non da voi, dal resto di tutto il mondo.

Vi confesso, che da che vi conosco, non mi siete dispiaciuto più di questa volta, nè mai mi saria immaginato, che un amico come voi, m' avesse ad offendere in quello, donde io so che merito maggior lode.

Ai pittori della mia condizione e genio stravagante è forza, dalla misura in poi, lasciare il resto in libertà; (così averei fatto io in accidente simile con voi,) e contentarsi di non volere insegnare ai babbi a far figliuoli; e come ho detto di sopra, a secondar il genio di chi ha da operare, e credere ch' ogni poca cosa di pittore classico è per ricevere e pregio e lode da chi vivamente intende, e vi ricordo, che val più un solo verso d' Omero, che un intero poema d'un Cherilo.

Non dirò di vantaggio per non dar luogo alla collera, nella quale m' avete messo. Ah Dio! e chi mai sentì minchioneria più massima di questa? Creder d' esperimentare l' amico, e l' amico pittore, dalla quantità delle figure!

Serbate, serbate, amico, codeste vostre rigorose cavillazioni per le poesie, e non per il mio animo, il quale per voi è impeccabile; e se questo succede per la soverchia mia schiettezza, e libertà di lingua, vi prometto per l' avvenire in simili minchionerie d' adularvi ancor io. Saluto tutti di casa, e voi abbraccio con l' anima.—Di Roma, questo dì 4 di Giugno, 1664.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XIV.

Siete pur buono a farvi dare ad intendere, che io sia applicato a far danari, e massime ne' presenti tempi, quando ogni fedel Cristiano fa sei nodi ad un testone. Questi, che v' ha ragguagliato di questa fola, o mi desidera bene, o sogna; della prima lo ringrazio, della seconda mi dispiace, che non sia vero. Ricciardi mio, tutte le mie ricchezze consistono in quei quattro bajocchi applicati nelle lane, i quali negozj, per grazia de' Signori rumori di guerra, sono dismessi affatto, e per consequenza impediti a me quei pochi emolumenti, che se ne cavavano. E' ben vero,

che mi trovo vicino ad un migliajo di scudi di pitture fatte, delle quali con difficoltà non ordinaria se ne va esitando qualcheduna. Commission da farne! è un anno che non s' è veduto cane ad ordinarne, e se le cose della guerra piglieranno vigore, potrò piantare i pennelli nell' orto; ed eccovi detto, e scoperto tutti i miei arcani intorno al far danari. Contuttociò vi prego a mantenere in questa fede quelli, che lo credono."

Vado smattendo qualche carta, con la qual mercanzia mantengo viva la borsa; et a questa mercanzia anco vi si aggiunge la nuova Imposizione, che si tratta di mettere alla carta. Amico, le nostre ricchezze, bisogna, che consistano nell' animo, e di contentarsi di libare, quando altri ingojano le prosperità. Basta, s' io vendessi tutte queste mie pitture, che di presente mi trovo, vorrei avere in culo Creso, ma ci vuol del tempo.

Mi dispiace della cattiva raccolta del vino, ed in questo l' esser Poeta vi nuoce.

Farfanicchio vi saluta, e vi porta di continuo nella lingua, ed il nostro focolare in questa stagione non ode cosa più frequente, che il vostro nome.

Vi prego a riverire in mio nome tutti di casa, ed

a credere, come sempre vi dirò, che non ho cosa più viva nel mio cuore che voi, e vi bacio le mani.—Di Roma, questo dì 2. di Gennajo, 1665.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XV.

Avete ragione, onde datemi pure dello smemorato, che mi si deve. Non ricordarmi della carta del Filolao, e pure involger l' altre, e l' avevo sotto gli occhi! Compatitemi, perchè ho buona parte di me fuora di me medesimo. Con altra occasione vi perverrà nelle mani.

Per soddisfarvi circa a quel *pinx* delle mie carte, ve l' ho messo per mia cortesia, e per far credere ch' io intanto l' ho intagliate, inquanto l' avevo dipinte; ma la verità è che dall' Attilio in poi tra le grandi, e del Democrito e Diogene della scodella fra le mezzane, nessun' altra è stata da me colorita, nè è stata bastante una fantasia come quella de' giganti a muovere la voglia a nessuno di vedersela colorita. A questo proposito averei occasione di scrivervi una bibbia, non già sacra, ma scomunicatissima; non lo fò perchè così

mi detta la generosità del mio animo, e della mia forse non dannabile superbia. Oh quanto siamo tenuti alla scuola degli Stoici, i quali ci hanno insegnato un' efficace medicina per alcune umane difficultà!

Le dedicatorie o Latine, o volgari ci devono importar poco, con tuttociò procurerò di sodisfarvi.

Vi mandai per l'ordinario passato la licenza domandatami; averei caro, che vi giugnesse sicura. Quella vostra particolarità (*così vi fussimo noi*) parlando della vittellina, mi ha pieno di amaritudine, avendomi fatto ricordare delle divine solitudini di Strozzavolpe, ch' ogni abitato luogo è nemico mortal degli occhj miei.

Per sollievo del mio animo vado meditando qualche viaggio; se succederà in ciò risoluzione nessuna ve ne darò parte; caso che no, svanirà con gli altri miei castelli in aria.

Del resto vi prego a comandarmi, ed a credere, ch' io non ho di vivo, e di tenace nella mia memoria, e nel mio cuore, che 'l vostro affetto, e l' obbligazioni che professo alla mia Lucrezia, la quale in compagnia d' Augusto vi riveriscono, ed io di cuore v' abbraccio. —Questo dì 11 d' Ottobre, 1665.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XVI.

Questo smarrimento di lettere a me servirà, che un giorno perda affatto il resto del mio poco cervello. Vi giuro, che cinque sono state le lettere inviatevi prima di ricevere quest' ultima vostra per l' ordinario di Milano, la quale mi ha rimesso una dozzina d' anni di vantaggio, e se non compariva, ero per mettere in ordine la valigia, e marciare a costesta volta, e per certo, che l' indovinavo, poichè averei potuto servire di fattore al murator della vostra fabbrica. Argomento sicurissimo, che voi avete trovo il tesoro al detto de' Napoletani, i quali dicono: chi ha denaro fraveca, e chi ha viento naveca.

Ma che direte della mia vista, la quale mi va così declinando, che non posso leggere una lettera, se non la discosto quattro palmi dagli occhi. La testa non patisce altro naufragio, accorgendomi giornalmente, che la spensierataggine mi fu, e m' è di presente di grandissimo giovamento.

Le settimane passate, per grazia della fortuna, finii d' accomodarmi i venti scudi il mese; sicchè non ho da pensar più a questo punto; tutto quello, che s' an-

derà facendo, servirà di vantaggio. Ve lo fo sapere, acciò ve ne possiate prevalere nell' occasioni.

Jeri Augusto incominciò il suo primo mezz' occhio. Quello, che sia per essere di lui in questo genere del disegno lo rimetto al soggetto. Vi riverisco, conforme il simile fa la Signora Lucrezia, la quale si ritrova con non troppo buona salute.

Quì teniamo Monsù Possino più dall' altro, che da questo mondo. Il mio Signor Giulio Martinelli anch' esso sì ritrova in un fondo di letto con le gambe tutte impiagate, e quel, che più importa con 73. anni in su le spalle. Il Cielo sia quello, che liberi, e l' uno e l' altro, e conceda a voi tutto il bene, che desiderate, mentre io di tutto cuore vi abbraccio, e riverisco.—Di Roma, questo dì ultimo d' Ottobre, 1665.

Di V. S. Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XVII.

Col P. Cavalli è stata V. S. servita nella conformità che desiderava; resta ch' io la sodisfaccia circa le sue curiosissime domande.

Primieramente la misura dell' Attilio sono braccia quattro di lunghezza e poche dita di più, e di altezza due e mezzo poco più. Il regalo, che ne riportai, furono cento piastre sotto una forma di cacio Parmigiano, mandatami in una canestra, di detto quadro n'ho trovo più volte cento doble, e se avessi a dipingere adesso, non lo farei per meno di quattro cento scudi.*

Di quello delle streghe, la sua lunghezza sono braccia due e un quarto, e alto uno e mezzo poco più. Il suo regalo furono quindici doble, e sono ormai venti anni che lo feci. Di questo, ogni volta, che il Signor Rossi sene avesse voluto privare, gli potevano entrar nelle mani quattrocento scudi; ed una volta gliene furono offerti cinquecento; ed io gli ho fatta la profezia, che, dopo me, sarà in prezzo di mille scudi, atteso che trapassa i segni della curiosità e come tale, si mostra dopo tutte le cose, e sta coperto col taffettà; ed ecco sodisfatta alla vostra curiosità con la confidenza dovuta.

I giganti, e l' Edipo non sono stati da me ancora

* Questo quadro ora è in casa del Contestabile. Fu intagliato in rame da Salvatore stesso.

depinti, il resto sì; è ben vero ch' ho pensiero una volta depingerli, se mi verrà fatto.

L' ambasciator Priuli, mentre stette in Roma, prese di me tre tele, una grande e due mezzane, ed un' altra commesse da Parigi, che sono al numero di quattro con una piccola. E' questo è quanto V. S. desidera saper da me. Aggiungo a questo, che qui non capita Francese che si diletti di Pittura, che non procuri d' aver qualche cosa del mio.

Intorno alla salute, me la vado passando al meglio, che sia possibile; e come vi scrissi, mi bisogna fuggire il freddo. L' andare à Venezia non so se mi potrà riuscire; basta mi rimetterò al destino. Vi prego con tutto il cuore riverirmi il Signore Minucci, Signor Signoretti, e Signor Cordini; mentre voi salutano con quell' amore, che vi si deve, la Signora Lucrezia ed Augusto, ed io v' abbraccio di tutto cuore.—Di Roma, questo dì 15 di Decembre, 1666.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XVIII.

Quando credevo che l' indiavolata stagione presente fusse per finire, da quattro giorni in quà s' è fatta da capo. Il freddo di quest' anno è stato così fuor del consueto bestiale, che mi ha fatto temere più d' una volta d' avermi a perdere affatto. La mia testa al caldo si distempera, al freddo si riduce a temer di una caduta all' improvviso, e dire alla sua vita, buona notte, a rivederei a' liti d' Acheronte. Ho sofferto due mesi di dolor di testa con tutto il riguardo di regolarmi da Gallina. I miei piedi sono continuamente due pezzi di giaccio, con tutto il beneficio dei calzerotti fattimi venire da Venezia.

Nelle mie stanze non vi si smorza mai il fuoco; e più diligente che non era il Cavagliere Cigoli * non è fessura in mia casa, che non sia giornalmente da me stoppata diligentemente, e pure non posso riscaldarmi, nè mi riscalderiano le faci di Cupido, nè gli abbracciamenti di Frine. D' ogni altra cosa il mio labbro favella che di pennello le tele volte al muro, i colori in

* Pittore celebratissimo.

tutto e per tutto impietriti, nè altre specie in me si raggirano che di cammini, di bracieri, scalda letti, mani cotti, guanti impellicciati, scarpini di lana, berrettini foderati, e simili sorte di cose. In fatti, amico, io mi conosco assai deteriorato dal mio solito calore; e che sia vero, mi son ridotto a passare i giorni intieri senza favellare, e quella ardenza d' una volta in me spiritosa, la contemplo sfumata affatto. Guai a me, amico, se mi trovassi necessitato d' avere ad esercitarmi il pennello per bisogno, che saria sforzato o di morir sotto il giogo, o di strapazzare il mestiero.

Ma sé voi mi domandate in che spendo il giorno ne' mesi dell' inverno, risponderei: i giorni sereni in camminare solo come un pazzo, visitando tutte le solitudini di questo cielo; i giorni cattivi, serrato in casa a passeggiare come un forsennato, ovvero a leggere qualche libro, e sentire più, che esercitare chiaccherie. Non passa settimana che non rimanga richiesto di pitture, a segno tale, che da molti ne vengo straordinariamente ripreso; ma li lascio cantare, che sa molto bene la mestola i fatti della pignatta.

Ma discorriamo di cose meno malinconiche. Questa mattina sono stato un paio d' ore col nostro Signor Francesco il quale abita vicino al mio quartiere. Stava

concludendo un paese, e gli ho giovato in molte cose; conforme feci in un altro ai giorni passati. Li tengo sempre ricordato che si prevaglia di me in tutto quello, che li farà di bisogno, poichè così mi vien comandato da voi. Il suo costume a me non dispiace; la vocazione nell' arte è sicura, ogn i volta però che vorrà assiduamente applicarci col contentarsi di non contentarsi. Vi saluta caramente, e dice di non ricevere vostre lettere, come il simile posso dire anch' io.

Le settimane passate fu da me il Signor Cavagliere Fabbroni con intenzione di *trasferirsi a costesta volta*, ma poi s' è mutato d' opinione, e recita da pasquella in alcune commedie che si fanno in casa del Signor Contestabile recitate all' improvviso da Cavalieri. Discorremmo sempre di voi, ed in particolare di quella divinissima giornata, di tanti anni sono, nelle riviere di costest' Arno.

Datemi qualche ragguaglio della vostra salute (non dico della vostra fortuna che so ch' è sempre la medesima). Ditemi se fate nessuna Commedia? come sta il Signor Cosimo? mentre a voi si raccommanda la Signora Lucrezia in compagnia d' Augusto.

A nuova *stagione* preparativi d' averci a rivedere, che a me non basta più l' animo di mandarla più alla lunga.

Se vi bisognassero denari, io ne ho sempre per voi, e di cuore v' abbraccio.—Di Roma, questo dì 26 di Gennaro, 1666.

Di V. S. Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XIX.

Vi scrivo di ritorno dalla valle di Giosaffatte, cioè dalla festa di S. Giovanni Decollato, la quale tale è stata per me in quest' anno. Un fratello d' un Papa insieme con quattro suoi figliuoli, entrati novizj in quella Compagnia per togliere la speranza a quanti siano mai per tentar simil festa per l' avvenire, hanno voluto sfiorare Roma delle sue più superbe pitture, ed in particolare de' più famosi quadri della regina di Svezia, i quali soli, senz' altra compagnia, erano bastanti a spaventare il medesimo inferno.

Il primo motivo di questi Signori fu di non servirsi di nessun' opera di pittori viventi, risoluzione che più m' invogliò a procurarne il concorso, e con non ordinaria fatica ottenni io solo, fra i vivi, di cimentarmi fra tanti morti.

Vi giuro, amico, che mai non mi sono trovo in impegno maggiore, ma perchè occasione più bella non era per sortir mai più, per non tradirla ho questa volta arrisicato il tutto per confirmarmi nel credito della fama.

Mi do ad intendere, che siate per rallegrarvene, avendo saputo mostrar la fronte con tanti Achilli dell' arte della pittura. Ma perchè so, che bramate sapere quali siano stati i soggetti delle mie pitture, uno è stato il fatto di Saulle, quando della Pitonessa ottenne di favellare all' anima del Profeta Samuele, quadro di misura di palmi 12 d' altezza, e 9 di larghezza. L' altro, d' altezza di palmi 9, e largo 5, rappresenta S. Giorgio in atto di trionfare dell' estinto dragone. E quest' è quanto, amico, devo dirvi per iscusa, di non avervi potuto soddisfar con mie lettere.

Del resto, a me dispiacciono, sin nell' anima, i vostri travagli, nè mai cesserò di riplicarvi, che se v' ha parte la penuria del denaro, la mia borsa è sempre piena per voi, senza che mi abbiate nè anche a ringraziare.

Mi dispiace sentir che 'l Cesti * sia per trasferirsi a Venezia, luogo che dovria sfuggire più che la peste,

* Maestro di musica eccellente.

per non rammentar negli animi di coloro gli accidenti succeduti per sua cagione.

Riverisco il Signore Cosimo, e saluto tutti gli amici, mentre abbraccio voi con tutto il mio cuore. - Di Roma, questo dì 15 di Settembre, 1668.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

LETTERA XX.

Sonate le campane, che finalmente, dopo trent' anni di stanza in Roma, e d' una strascinata speranza, ripiena di continovate lamentazioni e co' cieli e con gli uomini, s' è pure spuntato una volta di mettere al pubblico una tavola d' altare.

Il Signor Filippo Nerli depositario del Papa ostinato di vincere questa durezza, di fatto ha voluto fabbricare una sua cappella nella Chiesa di S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini; ed a dispetto delle stelle ha voluto che vi facessi la tavola, la quale incominciata da me, cinque mesi sono, la tralasciai con intenzione di ripigliarla a

quadragesima. Ma l' accidente della festa, che i signori Fiorentini sono necessitati di celebrare in detta chiesa per la canonizzazione di S. Maddelena de' Pazzi, m' ha sforzato a ripigliare il lavoro, e chiudermi in casa, ove sono stato un mese e mezzo in continove agonie, per trovarmi a tempo anch' io con la mia tavola alla lor festa. Quest' impegno m' ha tenuto non solo lontano dal commercio della penna, ma da ogni altra cosa di questo mondo, e vi posso dire, che mi son dimenticato infin di mangiare, ed è stata così ardua la mia applicazione, che verso il fine, mi necessitò a star due giorni in letto; e se non mi ajutavo col vomito, per certo che la passavo male, mediante alcune crudezze accumulate nello stomaco. Però, amico, compatitemi, se per la riputazione del pennello ho trascurato al debito che dovevo a voi della penna.

Sono due giorni che lavoro intorno alla tela del S. Torpè; finita che sarà, vene darò subito avviso. Fra tanto vi prego a volermi bene, ed a pensare di rivederci, non bastandomi l' animo di mandarla più alla lunga.

La Signora Lucrezia, con non troppo buona salute, ed Augusto il simile, vi salutano e spiritano di rivedervi, e tutto giorno non si fa altro, che rammentare gli

accidenti di Strozzavolpe.* Al Signore Fabbretti un bacio a mio nome, mentre vi abbraccio con tutta la mia anima.—Di Roma, questo dì 11 d' Ottobre, 1669.

Di V. S.

Amico vero,

S. ROSA.

Il Dottor Oliva vi saluta.

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* Villa del Signore Ricciardi.

PICTURES

BY SALVATOR ROSA.*

IN ENGLAND.

	In the Possession of
The Two Marys at the Tomb of Christ. †	Earl Grosvenor.
Portrait of Salvator (by himself) writing poetry. ‡	Ditto.
Two Views in Romagna.	Earl of Miltown.
Glaucus and Scylla.	Earl of Derby, Knowsley.

* This catalogue, chiefly formed from the collation of different authorities, and from information communicated to the author, can be considered only as a groundwork for future inquiry to those whose interest in the painter may tempt them to seek a closer acquaintance with his works. Unable personally to inspect the many collections noticed, or even by direct application to verify her quotations, she desires not to be held responsible for the *genuineness* of every picture thus attributed to Salvator: while the frequent change of hands to which this species of property is liable, may have led her into some errors in her *references*. Even while the work of collation was going forward, several of Salvator's pictures have been sold, and fallen to new proprietors.

† Purchased from the late Mr. Agar.

‡ "This portrait of one of the greatest landscape painters of the Italian School, exhibits him in a character, by which he, in his own time, obtained almost as much celebrity as he did by his pencil. He here represents himself as a poet, and as it were in the very act of writing. There is every reason to suppose that this picture very much resembled him, from the strong marks of individuality in the countenance."—*Description prefixed to the engraving of this portrait, which was purchased by the late Earl Grosvenor in Italy.*

	In the Possession of
Jacob's Vision	Duke of Devonshire's At Chiswick.
Jacob wrestling with the Angel .	
A large Landscape, with Soldiers reposing among the Rocks	
A large Landscape	
Xenocrates and Phryne.	Earl of Besborough.
Jason and the Dragon*	Honorable W. Ponsonby.
La Fortuna.	Duke of Beaufort.
Two Landscapes; Forest Scenery with Banditti	Earl Cowper.
View of the Bay of Naples.	
Belisarius †	Lord Townsend.
Diogenes ‡	Dowager March. Lansdown.
Democritus ‡	Ditto.
Œdipus; a Child exposed on a Tree.	* * *
Portrait of Salvator Rosa by himself §	Jesse Watts Russell, Esq. M.P.
Tobit and the Angel....(in 1816.)	The late B. West, Esq. R.A.
Mercury and the Woodman	Sir Abraham Hume.

* Purchased from the Duke of Chandos by the late Earl of Besborough.—It was afterwards sold to Mr. W. Smith, and at his sale to Geo. Watson Taylor, Esq. and it has been lately purchased by the Honorable W. Ponsonby.

† Given by the celebrated Frederick of Prussia to Mr. Secretary Townsend.

‡ Inscription—"Diogenes adolescentem manu bibentem intuitus, scyphum projecit."—"Democritus omnium derisor in omnium fine designatus."—These two fine pictures were purchased by the late Marquis of Lansdown from Sir — Young, about the year 1806, for a large sum.

§ On this fine portrait is a little inscription written by Salvator himself, very illustrative of his ardent feelings:

"*Miglior morir con gli amici,*
Che viver tra gli nemici."

	In the Possession of
The Death of Regulus	Earl Darnley.
Pythagoras teaching his doctrine to Fishermen	Ditto.
An old head	Ditto.
Birth of Orion	Ditto.
Mercury and Battus *	Baroness de Grey.
Pythagoras in the Cave	C. H. Tracy, Esq. (in 1821.)
A Scene painted on the lid of Salvator's harpsichord	Marq. of Abercorn (in 1823.)
A Skull and Music Books, on the same	Marq. of Abercorn (in 1823.)
Landscape with Banditti	J. Denison, Esq.
Harbour and Shipping	Earl of Radnor, Longford Castle, Wilts.
Bacchus on an Altar in a Wood †	Earl of Pembroke.
Socrates taking Poison	Fonthill Abbey.
View in Calabria with Soldiers	Fonthill Abbey.
Playing Dice ‡	Fonthill Abbey.
Job §	Fonthill Abbey.
A Holy Family	Marquis of Stafford.
Jacob attending his Flock	Marquis of Stafford.
The Soothsayers ‖	Marquis of Stafford.

* From the Ghigi Palace at Rome.

† See Passeri's description of this picture; also "Britton's Beauties of Wiltshire," Vol. i. p. 204.

‡ From the Colonna Palace.

§ From the Collection of the Santa Croce Palace at Rome.

‖ "This very exquisitely-coloured picture, from the Duc de Praslin's Collection, varies from the generality of works by this master. The scene is tranquil, soft, and delicate. The figures are all placed in easy positions, and the whole is finished with a light flowing pencil. On the foreground are seven figures, three of which are standing upright, the others reclining on the bank

	In the Possession of
Soldiers gaming	In the Collection of the late Sir Francis Bourgeois, now at Dulwich.
Portrait of a Young Man drawing	
Landscape	
Ditto	
Head of an Old Man	
Saint John preaching in the Wilderness	Earl of Ashburnham.
Philip baptizing the Eunuch	
Landscape and Figures	
The Flight into Egypt	
Marine View	
Ditto	
The Finding of Moses. *	Duke of Buckingham.
Two Landscapes	Lord Holland, Holland-house, Kensington.
Two Landscapes, with the Sketches of the story of Polycrates, Tyrant of Samos †	Earl of Warwick, Warwick Castle.
A desolate and dreary Landscape	
A Landscape of savage sublimity, and the most noble repose	
View of rocky Scenery, and a Cataract	

of a lake or estuary: the middle part is occupied by water; and in the background are some lofty crags and mountains, at the *foot* of which appears a town. In the gallery of T. Hope, Esq. is a duplicate of this picture. It has been engraved in small by Le Bos."—*Britton's Catalogue Raisonné.*

* Purchased from the Orleans Collection for £2500.

† Painted (in oil) on paper which has been pasted upon canvass. This must have been one of Salvator's very early productions, when his poverty obliged him to paint on paper, not having the means to purchase better materials.

	In the Possession of
Laomedon, King of Troy, detected by Neptune and Apollo	Late in the possession of D. W. Hunter, Esq. M. D.
A Landscape.—The principal feature of this fine picture is a magnificent shattered tree, under which reposes a group of figures: a lake, castle, and figures in the distant view	Paul Methuen, Esq. Corsham House.
St. Lawrence on the Gridiron....	
A Landscape; Rocky Scenery, deep Fall of Water—a fine group Banditti in the foreground	
The Travellers	William Croftes, Esq. West Harding, Norfolk.
The false Alexander*.....	* * *
Two Cabinet Landscapes†.....	— Tunno, Esq. Taplow Lodge.
Two Landscapes	J. Watts Russell, Esq. M. P.
Grand Landscape	P. J. Miles, Esq. M. P. Leigh Court, Bristol.
The Roman Augurs	Earl of Derby.
Mountainous Landscape, with River and Figures (the same subject as the *Soothsayers*)	T. Hope, Esq.
Sketch of Jason and the Dragon ..	Lord Radstock.
The Meeting of Ulysses and Nausicaa	Earl Harcourt, Nuneham Courtenay, Oxfordshire.

* From the Ghigi Palace. Under an engraving of this picture by Pietro Barboni, in the Author's possession, the title runs thus:—"Il preteso Alessandro, una volta nel Palazzo Ghigi, ora in Londra."

† "Executed in his cheering manner, so happily exemplified in his two Marine Views in the Palace Pitti, in which he seems to excel Vernet."

	In the Possession of
Jacob's Separation from Laban ..	Earl Waldegrave, Strawberry Hill.
Beggar Boys at Cards.....	Viscount Eardley, Belvedere House, Kent.
A Sea View with Rocks.....	Sir R. Colt Hoare, Bart. Stourhead, Wilts.
Democritus	
The Castle of St. Angelo	
Sea Storm	Marquess Hastings, Donnington Hall, Leicestershire.
Mahomet, from the Cornaro Palace	Earl of Carlisle, Castle Howard, Yorkshire.
Diogenes and Alexander	
Jupiter and the Countryman	Earl of Sandwich, Hinchinbrook House, Hants.
A Landscape	Sir Jos. Copley, Bart. Spotsbrough Hall, Yorkshire.
Landscape with Banditti.....	Sir H. Carr Ibbetson, Bart. Denton Park, Yorkshire.
Argus	Rev. Sir H. H. Aston Bruce, Bart. Down Hill, Londonderry.
Landscape with Banditti.....	
A Cave	
Diogenes and the Peasant	Lord Gosford, Worlingham Hall, Suffolk.
Peter's Denial of Christ	Marquis of Exeter, Burleigh House, Northamptonshire.
Three Philosophers.....	Wm. Hanbury, Esq. Kelmarsh Hall, Northamptonshire.
A large Landscape with Figures..	Viscount Palmerston, Broadlands, Hants.

	In the Possession of
A Landscape Banditti A Poor Family	Duchess of Dorset, Knowle, Kent.
St. Anthony Preaching to the Fishes A Landscape Witches at their Incantations	Earl Spencer, Althorp, Northamptonshire.
Theseus and his Mother Two Landscapes St. Thomas	Earl of Verulam, Gorhambury, Herts.
Christ holding a Globe	Sir R. Bedingfield, Bart. Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk.
Two Rocky Views	Andrew Fountaine, Esq. Narford Hall, Norfolk.
View of a Cavern A Romantic Scene Diogenes	Duke of Bedford, Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire.
Wounded Soldier	Marquis of Bute, Luton House, Bedfordshire.
Two Landscapes with groups of Figures Two Landscapes, from the Collection of Cardinal Guglielmi.. Two large Ditto Two spirited Sketches — Christ bearing the Cross, and a Crucifixion Head of a Hermit contemplating a Skull	Lord Arundel, of Wardour, Wardour Castle, Wilts.

PICTURES BY SALVATOR ROSA

IN THE

CONTINENTAL COLLECTIONS.

The Prodigal Son *	At Petersburgh.
Two Landscapes	Collection of M. DANOIT, at Bruxelles.
Tobias and Azarias †	(Late in) Paris.
St. Francis in the Desert	Keil, in Holstein: Gallery Schmidt.
Landscapes and Figure Pieces ..	Ditto.
Saul and the Witch of Endor ‡ ..	Paris, Royal Museum.
Grand Battle-piece	Ditto, ditto.
Great Landscape with many Figures	DUSSELDORF. (Electors Palatine.)

* From the Houghton Collection.

† There were several pictures of S. Rosa in the Hotel de Mazarin, now dispersed.—See *Entretiens sur les Vies et sur les Ouvrages des plus célèbres Peintres. Par M. Felibien.*

‡ "A most capital picture by Salvator is at Versailles, of which the subject is Saul and the Witch of Endor; and that singular performance displays the merits of the painter in the strongest point of light. The attitude of Saul is majestic; while the expression in his countenance is a judicious mixture of anxiety of heart, and eagerness for information. It is also observed, by good judges, that there is a dignity in the character of the Witch. But it is a kind of dignity very different from that of the monarch; it is enthusiasm. In the whole there is a wonderful spirit, and with that spirit, a freedom of pencil that very few have equalled."—*Pilkington's Dictionary.*

IN ROME.

St. John Preaching to a Group of Persons	Colonna Palace.
St. John in the Desert	Ditto.
Two small Views	Corsini Palace.
The Prometheus	Ditto.
Two Views—Rocks and Water ..	Palace Spada.
Two Landscapes	Ditto.
Magnificent Marine View	Rospigliosi Palace.
St. Girolamo in the Desert.....	Barberini Palace.
Altarpiece in the Church of San Giovanni de' Fiorentini	
Belisarius, with magnificent Scenery	Casa Doria. *(a replico?)*
Cain and Abel.....	Casa Doria. *(Vasi.)*
Marine View	In the Collection of Signor Camuccini.
Portrait of a Warrior	
Philosopher and Satyr (the former a Portrait of Salvator Rosa) ..	Ghigi Palace.
A Sorceress	Ditto.
A Witch *	Gallery of the Campidoglio.

* "Unless some pains be taken to preserve this picture, which is in a sad plight, it must soon crumble into dust."—*Private letter from Rome to the Author.*

This picture so historically interesting, supposing it to be the Witch of the Rossi Gallery, exhibits a withered, half-naked hag, seated—her foot placed on a paper on which some astrological figures are placed, with a circle traced round its verge—with equidistant tapers lighted round it. The hair of this weird sister is dishevelled, and her wild eyes are bent fixedly on a book which lies open on her knee. This work has suffered so much from time and neglect, that it is difficult to ascertain all that original merit which induced Carlo Rossi to veil it with a silken curtain: the back-ground, and some of the accompaniments are almost obliterated; even the expression of the countenance may

A Group of Armed Men	Gallery of the CAMPIDOGLIO.
Landscape of River Scenery with a Group of Figures.	Late in the gallery of Signor GIOVANNI MALDURA.
Marine View—with the Miracle of the Money found in the Fish ..	Lately purchased by LORD MILTON.
Four Pictures in the Chapel di Monte Santo, placed there by Carlo Rossi	Lately purchased by His R. H. PRINCE LEOPOLD, of Naples.
Portrait of Masaniello	Gallery of CARDINAL FESCH.

FLORENCE.

A Landscape a little blackened by time, with three Figures draped in white	Royal Gallery.
The Lecadian Leap, painted on wood, in Chiaro scuro	
Wood Scenery, with an Old Man seated	
A magnificent Landscape, foreground of Rocks, and Water flowing round them	
Portrait of Salvator Rosa, by himself*	

only be guessed at. His other "*Strigonerie*," or Witcherigs, of which he was so fond, have all disappeared from Rome. There are doubts entertained as to the authenticity of the *Maga* in the Ghigi Palace.

* "Le portrait moral de Salvator Rosa est tracé dans le tableau qui fait le sujet de cet article. Le peintre y a fait passer son génie brûlant, l'esprit satyrique dont il était animé, et le feu céleste qui échauffe tous ses ouvrages."

Galerie de Florence, Com. 2. Paris, 1789.

A Philosopher showing a Masque to a Man	
Great Battle Piece	Pitti Palace.
Two superb Sea Views, with large Vessels afloat	Pitti Palace.
St. Anthony's Temptations.....	
Justice, banished from Heaven, takes refuge with some Peasants upon Earth	
Fear *	
Peace Crowned with Olives, between a Dove and a Lamb	
Democritus among the Tombs ..	
Jonas Preaching at Nineveh	
Fall of the Giants	
Hagar in the Desert	
Mercury and the Peasant	
Tityus preyed on by a Vulture †.	

* *L'Effroi—Tableau de Salvator Rosa.*

Le grand art du poëte, du peintre, est de faire penser; de n'indiquer au spectateur, au lecteur, que le commencement d'une action, afin que leur imagination, toujours active, lui donne son complément. Salvator Rosa a suivi fidèlement ce principe dans l'Effroi. Deux philosophes errent dans la campagne. Le charme de leurs graves entretiens leur a fait quitter les chemins battus. Ils veulent enfin les rejoindre, et suivre un sentier qui s'offre à leur vue. Mais un laboureur survient; ses traits et sa voix altérés annoncent aux philosophes qu'ils couriraient de grands dangers, s'ils prenaient cette route détournée. Salvator Rosa aimait à traiter des sujets de terreur; et il y excellait. Celui-ci en est une belle preuve. On admire dans le ciel une brillante touche, et une savante distribution des nuages. Le coloris est vrai, et mérite au peintre une place distinguée parmi les paysagistes.

Galerie de Florence, 1789.

† In the *Galerie de Florence* (in which is a fine engraving of this picture)

The Catiline Conspiracy.....	Casa Martelli. (Now in the Pitti).
Two Fine Landscapes.....	Casa Capponi.

GENOA.

A great Picture representing Christ chasing the Traders out of the Temple*	Cataneo Palace.
Jeremiah restored to Liberty	
Pythagoras	
A Fire†	Balbi Palace.

NAPLES.

Landscapes	Gallery of the Archbishop of Tarentum.
Saint Nicholas de' Bari	Church of San Martino (Chartreuse.)

MILAN.

Assumption of the Virgin Mary .	Chiesa della Vittoria.
The Purgatory.....	Gallery of the Brera.

the Prometheus or the Tityus is given among the pictures then in Florence, of Salvator Rosa's. I am ignorant if this is a *replico*, or the original picture bearing that name, in the Corsini Gallery at Rome. Some doubts are entertained at present of its being Rosa's.

* "Le Seigneur qui chasse les vendeurs du Temple, en figures et grandeur naturelles, très beau et très rare chef-d'œuvre du célèbre Salvator Rosa."—*Galerie de Florence.*

† "Sur la grande porte, une Incendie, *style de Salvator Rosa*," says the French catalogue of the galleries of Genoa.

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Jason charming the Dragon.

Diogenes flinging away his Cup.

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The original plates, nearly worn out, were sold by the present family (descendants of Rosa) to the Roman Government for 1000 dollars; and are now in the Papal Chalcographic Office.†

His Monogram is marked by an S and an R united. He also occasionally inscribed his name thus—S. Rosa. ‡

SR Un S entrelacé dans un R denote *Silvestre Ravenas* et *Salvator Rosa*, comme je l'ai dit ci-dessus dans R et S.

Dictionnaire des Monogrammes Lettres Initiales, Logogryphes, Rebus, &c; traduit de l'Allemand. Paris, 1762, pp. 272, 359.

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* Pascoli says of S. Rosa, that he was "Bravissimo intagliatore in acquaforte, ed intaglio molte opere sue."

† "Salvator left about ninety etchings executed in a spirited and masterly manner: they are distinguished by an intelligent management of the chiaroscuro, and there is uncommon vivacity and expression in the heads."

See Bryan's Dictionary, article "Rosa."

‡ Copies were however, it is said, piratically executed by a living artist of considerable merit.

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* See "Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres," Tom. 1.

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THE END.

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